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SEMI-MONTHLY

Vol. VII, No. 12

NOVEMBER 1, 1897

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# The Chap-Book

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## NOTES

### POLITICAL

**P**ROPHECY is a poor business at all times, and it is especially risky on the eve on an election in which four hundred and fifty thousand votes at least will be cast; but it is almost safe to predict that Van Wyck will be elected mayor of Greater New York next Tuesday. This appears to be the judgment of the closest observers of political affairs in that metropolis. Something may be said in favor of the supposition that Mr. Low has stirred the hearts of a sufficient number of voters to carry him into office, but we must reflect that his "common sense" appeals have not touched the sensibilities of those sweepings and rakings of Europe who make up such a large part of the vote of New York. What do the children of New York's "Jago" care for "municipal reform?" What satisfaction can "Maggie's" brother find in being governed by a gentleman who knows his quantities? His examples have not been very stimulating to the political action that may serve to mar his enjoyment of the Sabbath "mixed ale," or the right to die by the hand of his fellow-rowdy. He has had it from the lips of Cornelius Bliss, Esq., millionaire, philanthropist, member of Mr. McKinley's cabinet, that the properly patriotic thing to do is to vote with "the machine." But he has no sympathy with Mr. Bliss's machine. He has inherited a profound hatred for it. There is a "machine" around the corner—the old machine that licensed him to drink himself into the gutter, that beat him into insensibility with a night-stick, that encouraged him to lie in comfortable squalor—in short, that was once a father and mother to him. So he is "wid Croker," and being more numerous than the combined circulations of the *Evening Post*, the *Tribune*, and the *Times*, he promises to elect Van Wyck by a clear plurality over the president of Columbia. Only one sign points to Low. In the past large registrations have meant victory for decent municipal movements, and the registration this year is relatively larger than it ever was before. But this, after all, is an unsubstantial comfort. The road for the return of Tammany seems clear, and for this may the Lord make the people of New York duly grateful to Mr. McKinley and Mr. Platt.

LORD SALISBURY has denied with much vigor the announcement of his retirement from the

cabinet, but the story sticks obstinately. It is well known that Lady Salisbury is in ill-health and the prime minister suffers the common discomforts of men of his age and habit, aggravated by a diabetic tendency. The cares of the office have fallen heavily on him and his failures in the East have embittered him. Doubtless he would retire before many weeks if he could name a successor competent to fill his place and not distasteful to his party. But Mr. Balfour is indolent and indifferent, the Duke of Devonshire is as incapable of arousing enthusiasm as a horse-block, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach lacks the voice of authority. Mr. Chamberlain is the strong man of the hour, but Mr. Chamberlain has managed to estrange the old Tories to such an extent that they are ready to rebel against him at the first opportunity.

THE ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS are just beginning to be conscious of a reawakening of that spirit of revolution in the Irish people that has been so costly to English rule in the past. The *Pall Mall Gazette* notices that the ceremony at Glasnevin, in commemoration of Parnell, "instead of being a general miscellaneous display of feeling wore a very much more organized air" than ever before. It rightly connects this fact with the preparations for celebrating the centenary of '98. Those who are acquainted with the movements of the Irish and, in Mr. Howells' phrase, "the secondary Irish" in this country, know that the purpose of their leaders is to make this celebration the beginning of a radical agitation that will shake out of public life the nagging barristers, accountants, and journalists who now represent Ireland in the House of Commons, and send to the front men of action, supported, as Mr. Parnell was unquestionably, by secret societies in America and "the ould country." So far as we can see, the preparations for the celebration are completely in the hands of the Irish Revolutionary Brethren, a secret organization that has gained great vitality since the Land League sank into a comatose condition. The purpose is to send as large a number of radical Irishmen to Dublin as the funds of the organization and private contributions can provide for and make a "showing" of revolutionary strength that will convince the people of the necessity for rehabilitating the "force policy." As the *Pall Mall* says: "It has gone forth that the manner of the keeping of the '98 will leave a permanent mark on the future of Irish movements." We shall look to see a great deal of hard bidding by the politicians for the friendship of the '98 men, for it has passed into an axiom of Irish politics that the support of the illegal societies is the only safe dependence of an Irish leader, as fear of these societies in the past has been the spur that has compelled every English government to grant favorable legislation to Ireland. At the present moment Mr. Balfour is preparing to checkmate the revolutionists by

jamming through a bill for Irish local government. This may placate Mr. Blake of London; but will it satisfy Mr. Devoy of New York and men of his stamp who are at the bottom of the agitation?

BETWEEN THE EVIDENCES OF EPHRAIM, the manifestations of Manassah, and the posterity of Peleg, according to Captain Totten, and the cover of Mr. Benjamin Harrison's new book, according to nobody at all, the shield-of-arms of the United States is suffering indignities. The New Haven warrior has written one book on the subject and threatens another, while the Indianapolis General decorates his work with a curious armorial achievement showing forth six stripes and thirteen stars. Now, almost everybody seems ignorant of the fact that the American shield should have no stars upon it at all, and that of the thirteen stripes seven are white. The British baronet who was the first to devise this most interesting example of heraldic symbolism placed stars on the blue, it is true, but he intended thereby to signify Heaven protecting the States. Mr. William Barton, however, says that the blue, standing for Vigilance, Perseverance, and Justice, means Congress supported by the various American commonwealths; and Mr. Charles Thomson, a former Secretary of Congress, placed the thirteen stars in the crest of the national arms, where they remain, except when some one who does not know puts them in the wrong place, the shield, as in the Harrison case.

But the matter of six stripes, three red and three white, is puzzling. After considerable reflection it seems likely that these may be intended to signify the number of offices the illustrious contributor to *The Ladies' Home Journal* has permitted himself to accept from the hands of a grateful nation—the more so that three of these more or less lucrative posts were in the army—red meaning Hardiness and Valor; and three civil—white denoting Purity and Innocence—with all of which qualities the volume is redolent. In this view, if Mr. Harrison had not been beaten for the governorship of Indiana in 1876, there would have been another white stripe.

#### LITERARY

THE LATE MR. C. A. DANA, when all is said against him that can be said, will take a settled place among the great editors of the world, along with Greeley and Delane. Editors, of course, are of a race distinct from journalists. Mr. Dana, as a writer, in spite of his phenomenal reputation, had at least a score of superiors among the journalists of our own country. It was as an editor that he was unique. No man probably ever stamped himself more thoroughly on a newspaper than did Mr. Dana on the *Sun*. Every man who entered his office became forthwith a Dana in little, caught his editor's style, copied his mannerisms, and was imbued with



his very modes of thought. Every editorial in the *Sun* seemed to come from the same pen, so exactly did each resemble its fellow in sentiment and method; and from a journalistic view the result was admirably symmetrical. The editorial page of the *Sun* was the condensed essence of Mr. Dana, with some of his merits and almost all his faults. There was a Mr. Dana that existed apart from his newspaper, a charming, cultivated, open-minded gentleman. But he was reserved for the benefit of his friends. The editor of the *Sun* bore little resemblance to him. Mr. Dana was gracefully conversant with history and art and literature. He could read in Russian, French, German, Italian, and Icelandic; he was a dilettante in paintings and old china; he dabbled in horticulture. Not that he had any scientific inclination towards literature or æsthetics; but he liked to be known as a linguist and an authority on Wedgwood. His knowledge was superficial and inexact, like the knowledge of all men who have enough intellectual ambition to read and not enough to study. He learnt sufficient for his purposes and no more; for his nature was above all a practical one. And it was the practical side of his character that produced the editor of the *Sun*. Mr. Dana put aside his accomplishments when he entered his office.

The editor of the *Sun* knew nothing about flowers or foreign languages; he became an ordinary, ignorant American. Mr. Dana retained a good deal of the early Brook Farm enthusiasm. The editor of the *Sun* was the cynical roué of politics, ready at any moment, out of sheer devilry, to support every form of political blackguardism. Mr. Dana was a man of more than average intelligence and refinement. The editor of the *Sun* proposed the erection of a statue to the honor of Boss Tweed. It was so in everything. The editor of the *Sun* threw Mr. Dana out of the window and made himself the mouthpiece of the average man. And nobody, we may be sure, got more amusement from the exhibition than Mr. Dana himself. He concocted the editor out of sheer love of sport, palmed him off on the people, and the people took him seriously as the real and original C. A. Dana. But it was done with splendid art and perseverance, and no doubt a good many persons will be surprised to hear that the editor of the *Sun* was never Mr. Dana.

WHATEVER one may have thought of the policy and the judgments of the *Sun* under Mr. Dana's editorial care, it was impossible to deny that it was the best written newspaper in America, and the only newspaper which has developed an individual style. Things in it were not in the manner of this or that clever reporter or Richard Harding Davis, but of the clever *Sun* itself. Mr. Dana's theory was that the great point was not to furnish the news before the other papers, but to make it more interesting. If a mur-

der was committed in some obscure Connecticut village at four in the afternoon, the *Journal* and the *World* were always able to furnish a whole page on the subject the next morning, containing "cuts" of the murderer and his family even to the third and fourth generations. But, unfortunately, in the hurry the story was made to read so like last week's murder in Weehawken that the interest in it was largely lost. Perhaps two days later the *Sun* would present the matter in two columns, written so well that it might have been a chapter out of some successful novel.

This was not entirely the result of preternatural cleverness on the part of the *Sun's* reporters, but because nothing got into the *Sun's* columns quite as it was written. It was due to the *Sun's* "copyholders," and everything printed went through their hands for revision. At times this actually amounted to rewriting. In this sense the *Sun* has been far and away the best "edited" newspaper in America.

A RECENT NUMBER of the *Saturday Review* contained the following review of a book by Mr. Burgin. We reproduce it partly because it has a personal interest for Americans, and partly because the *Saturday Review* was once the chosen representative of supreme Oxford culture. That, to be sure, was before Mr. Frank Harris took hold of it. "Not very long ago," says this journal, with real University wit and refinement, "a distinguished American writer was the guest at a large dinner-party, in the Holborn Restaurant, of a club called 'The New Vagabonds.' During the day some of the vagabonds had been showing the sights of the town to the old gentleman, who had become helpless from weariness and wine. Consequently, he made a silly speech. Not a vagabond in the place stirring to help him out, the old gentleman went tottering from the room. Then giggling and grinning, Mr. Burgin rose to announce that the club committee had resolved to give a guinea to the man who made the best report of the speech, and from a shorthand note, read a report himself. It was an apish act. Even if a vagabond has no dignity he should have some respect for an old gentleman who is his guest. This is an apish book. In it, from the lips of one of Mr. Burgin's characters, we have the speech again. We have much also of the same kind," etc., etc.

"AS AN EDITOR Mr. Alden is the most practical of men, but he is in reality a poet, and in another age he might have been a mystic." We are happy to present that remarkable sentence as an apt epitome of the judgment and critical ability with which Mr. Charles Dudley Warner is compiling his "Library of the World's Best Literature." Every one knows that Mr. Alden's work has slight title to be called literature. His inclusion in Mr. Warner's "Library" is either a piece of log-rolling or the re-

sult of sheer critical incompetence. Probably it is a little of both. Any way, even if it stood alone, it would be enough to wipe out all Mr. Warner's grandiloquent claims to immortality on the strength of this collection. Unfortunately it does not stand alone. Looking through the first few volumes of this literary curiosity we came upon at least thirty writers, most of them Americans, who have no standing whatever outside Home Reading Societies in the backwoods of Wisconsin. Just look at this list:—Abigail Adams, Grace Aquilar, W. H. Ainsworth, Louisa May Alcott, Grant Allen, James Lane Allen, Henry Martyn Baird, Baring-Gould, H. W. Beecher, Walter Besant, William Black, Mathilde Blind, George H. Boker, Charles F. Browne, H. H. Brownell, H. C. Bunner, Horace Bushnell, Hall Caine, Rufus Choate, Rose Terry Cooke, Marion Crawford, and S. R. Crockett! Think too of the exquisite sense of proportion that gives 25 pages to Abigail Adams, 36 to J. M. Barrie, 36 to Henry Ward Beecher and 23 to Addison, 37 to T. B. Aldrich and 17 to Æschylus, 20 to G. W. Cable and 12 to Alfieri! And this precious compilation will, of course, be taken as representative of American criticism. This is America's judgment on the literature of the world! A score or so of the cleverest men in America deliberately put it on record that they think Crockett and Hall Caine examples of the finest English fiction. And of course they will get the approval of the popular verdict. The humiliation of it will be borne by those of us who still prefer literature to trash and think it rather unbecoming in scholars to spoil an excellent collection of rubbish by even scanty parings from the classics.

WILLIAM MORRIS'S FRIENDS are in fear that his works which still remain to be published will fall horrid victims to the interpretative critic, now that the author himself can no longer warn his readers against entangling themselves in a maze of allegory. In '95, when the critics wandered in some confusion within *The Wood Beyond the World*, Morris wrote to the *Spectator* a pretty direct comment on their attempts to read into his work what he had not meant should be there.

"I had not the least intention of thrusting an allegory into *The Wood Beyond the World*; it is meant for a tale pure and simple, with nothing didactic about it. If I have to write or speak on social problems, I always try to be as direct as I possibly can be. On the other hand I should consider it bad art in anyone writing an allegory not to make it clear from the first that that was his intention, and not to take care throughout that the allegory and the story should interpenetrate, as does the great master of allegory, Bunyan."

The reviewer of the London *Daily Chronicle*, when he attacked *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, found it a tissue of socialistic allegory, much of

which he understood and much of which he felt surely existed, although he could not furnish its key. Mr. Cockerell, of the Kelmscott Press, immediately protested against this, urging Morris's own authority. In spite of Morris and in spite of Mr. Cockerell we think the pitfalls for the reviewer almost cruelly numerous. Why even "beyond the world" or in the "wondrous isles" there should be a tyrant of the Isle of Increase Unsought, it is difficult to see, unless, as the reviewer thought, "increase unsought" meant "increased increment," and the tyrant was the capitalist. With Morris's dictum that the mixture of modern socialism with his own old Saxon dialect would be an inartistic mess we agree, but in Mr. Cockerell's feeling of assurance that the promise to tell a story, and a story only, was carried out in this last work, we have less part. *The Sundering Flood* is to appear in a few months. We hope it may offer plain sailing for the critics.

IT IS LESS THAN A YEAR AGO since all England was laughing at the editors of the *Pall Mall Magazine* for publishing as a "discovery" a sonnet of Wordsworth's that has appeared in every collected edition of that poet's works for the last thirty years. And now the editor of the sedate *Fornightly Review* has been placed in a position little less ludicrous. In the September number of his magazine he printed an article on the speed of warships. Sir William White, the chief constructor of the navy, made a terrible onslaught on the facts and conclusions of this article in the following issue. It was then discovered that the first contribution was the work of an Eton boy, seventeen years of age, and poor Sir William had to append to his reply a postscript to the effect that "the authorship now announced explains why the article is based on imperfect information, and throws in so strong relief the fact that the author is hardly qualified for the rôle of critic or reformer." This seems to hit the editor rather harder than the Eton boy. The discovery of the authorship, by-the-by, was made in characteristic fashion. The boy's father, in the fullness of his pride, sent the article to Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone, with his usual unconquerable innocence, wrote a letter of acknowledgment and congratulation. The letter was, of course, given out to the papers, and so the whole comedy stood revealed. But a schoolboy who can find amusement in hoaxing an English editor must lead a normally unexciting life.

THE OCTOBER NUMBER of the *Cosmopolitan*,—"the greatest and most potentially beneficent magazine that the human brain," etc., etc.,—is interesting for giving the lie direct to Mr. Walker's tirades against British rule in India. It may be remembered that when the first of Mr. Julian Hawthorne's articles on the Indian famine appeared in the *Cosmopolitan*, Mr. Walker prefaced it with some

remarks of such amazing ignorance that the gentleman who has charge of the Indian department in the Cosmopolitan University refused at once to take any other pupil, and he has made up his mind to devote the rest of his days to teaching his patron a few of the elementary facts of British government. Mr. Hawthorne, rather unkindly, takes up Mr. Walker's points one by one and gives an explicit denial to each, and if anything can disturb that gentleman's complacent *sang froid* this public humiliation in the pages of his own periodical ought to.

L'ENFANT TERRIBLE is a promised addition to our list of periodicals. It is to be edited by a marvelous combination of wayward talent: Mr. Gelett Burgess, Mr. Oliver Herford, and Mr. Jeffrey Roche of *The Pilot*. Rumor has it that the editors are to meet at dinner in some Bohemian restaurant in New York's *Quartier Latin* and never leave the table until the entire next issue, prose, verse, and drawings, is ready to send to the printers. There is a delightful flavor of Murger in the scheme. Mr. Burgess promises that *L'Enfant Terrible* shall be "the only comic paper that does not take itself seriously."

Mr. Oliver Herford is the joy of literary New York, the only really irresponsible and witty Bohemian left, since that country fell. His last *bon-mot* has all his own peculiar quality. At luncheon, recently, he was urged to have a second helping of honey. "Do you know," he remarked as he took it, "I believe if I lived in the country I should keep a bee."

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN COMPREHENSIBLE had the name of Thomas Moore been omitted from the list of honor on the walls of our new Congressional Library at Washington because he was not considered to be among the world's great poets, although such tablets are proverbially catholic in their tribute. But that Moore should in this way be made to pay the penalty for having written verse uncomplimentary to America is rather funny, if such be really the facts. Our skin seemingly toughens very little with the passage of time.

#### DRAMATIC

MANSFIELD AND SHAW ON THE SIDE OF THE DEVIL. No one can really take Mr. Bernard Shaw seriously, except Mr. Bernard Shaw himself. Perhaps Mr. Richard Mansfield does, but we doubt it. Of course some of the critics have taken him seriously, but that is the attitude of conventional criticism. In the new Shaw play, *The Devil's Disciple*, all the highest and best instincts of human nature in general are mocked at, or denied. Love, honor, chivalry, and religion, in their turn are held up to ridicule. It is all very clever and witty satire, but it is seriously misplaced in being

used as a weapon against the good, instead of against the bad or weak. One leaves the theatre feeling we are all a very worthless, wretched lot, which is hardly the conviction we expect to receive at the hands and heart of an arch Fabian! As a play it is brilliant, and bad. It begins very seriously, goes into high comedy, topples over into farce almost, and, after a glimpse of true tragedy, ends feebly with an extremely irritating *Deus ex machina*.

The great influence on Shaw is Ibsen. But Ibsen is serious, and every one takes him seriously (except again the conventional critics)! Shaw, on the other hand, seems to have sold his soul to a Mephistopheles, dressed in cap and bells! It is to be regretted that the Norwegian has not influenced the Englishman's spirit, as well as his dramatic style. Shaw's wit is his own, and no one, I am sure, would want that influenced or altered. His delightful effrontery is more conspicuous, too, in his later play than in his others that we have seen.

Mr. Mansfield in the title rôle comes perilously near perfection. Only the hypercritical can find fault with his attitudinizing; outside of that mannerism nothing is merited except praise and praise. We have no other actor on our stage to-day who could equal the performance. The intellectual appreciation of the wit and satire, is supplemented by the complete artistic expression of both. No author ever enjoyed more absolute justice in the performance of a rôle, than Shaw has done him at the hands and brain of Mansfield. We have a number of actors and actresses whose intelligences are equal to all and any demands made upon them, but whose powers of expression are too limited to do their intelligences justice. On the other hand we have as many, or even more, actors and actresses whose powers of expression are not so limited, but whose intelligences have failed to keep any of their appointments. Mr. Mansfield is an artist as an actor, and a man of intelligence. He not only has emotions—he has a brain; this does not mean that he is an intellectual man; he is not; or that as an artist he does n't make mistakes, and even sometimes do the wrong thing wilfully. He is like the proverbial little girl with the curl: "very good," or else "horrid," and in this last addition to his repertory, he is very good. So is Mrs. Mansfield, in a less degree. Beatrice Cameron is a good example of the actor whose intelligence is not supplemented by the necessary ability to express. We know of no rôle which we feel Mrs. Mansfield could not entirely conceive, and charmingly too, but alas, the power of expression has already several times failed to meet the fine and splendid demands she has made upon it. However in this instance there is no such failure. She is in the Shaw play, as the French nowadays love to say, "alright" and she shows the nicest artistic discrimination in her performance.



The stage settings are appropriate and the scenery good. This rather tame criticism can always be made of Mansfield's productions. He has not since *Richard III* made a particularly beautiful nor an especially good scenic production, but he never offends. He understands the art of suggesting atmosphere and details without overloading the stage with belittling properties. His company is adequate; the rather few supernumeraries equal to their occasions; one has a feeling that the actor-manager is not being over-extravagant in this matter, and that he can tour the country with only moderate expense. It would, perhaps, be well for the theatre were Mr. Mansfield rich,—so we are glad.

THE PARIS CORRESPONDENT of the New York *Evening Post* gives an interesting account of the reception of William Gillette's *Secret Service* at the Renaissance. The play was adapted for the French stage by Pierre Decourcelles, the author of *Two Little Vagrants*, and Sarah Bernhardt lent her theatre and company for the performance. The critics were unanimous in condemning a piece so entirely different from the leisurely, Thackerayan methods of dramatic development to which the French playwrights incline. Francisque Sarcey found the play wanting in clearness, and said, truly enough, that the principal characters do not announce themselves sufficiently until two acts are past. Also, the action is so changing, rapid, without being worked out at any point, or leaving time for human sentiment, that the general impression is that of a cinematograph show. Catulle Mendes pronounced the whole thing "rudimentary pantomime." A third critic spoke of the piece as being essentially a combination of circus and pantomime, and another proof of the decadence of true theatrical art. The rush and hurry of the plot, and the absence of sentiment and those literary qualities which, to the French, are of more importance than sustained action, struck every critic disagreeably. The play was a financial success because it was a novelty and met with so much opposition; but in the eyes of the veteran French critics it had no artistic merits whatever.

THE LONG AWAITED "American Drama" having at last arrived, turns out to be Chinese after all. Mr. Fernald in *The Cat and the Cherub* has done the best American play that we have seen for some years. We call it American because although every character is Chinese, the scene is in America, and the life of Chinatown in San Francisco is evidently somewhat changed by the civilization of the "foreign devil," which looms near by. We have had a number of theatrical performances which were thoroughly American without being plays. *Secret Service* for example is a superb melodrama, almost, if not quite, the best we ever saw, and distinctly American, but we must insist it is not a play, not a

really serious effort towards a modern drama. Again we do not hesitate to admit that Mr. Augustus Thomas is more American in his subjects than Mr. Fernald. Lafayette, Indiana, and small towns in Missouri are more our affair than San Francisco's Chinese quarter. But Mr. Thomas never quite succeeds in his attempts; his lachrymose and melodramatic moments continually avert perfection.

Mr. Fernald on the other hand is irreproachable in taste and literary sense, and at the same time vigorous and direct. His title is perhaps his only mistake. Here he did his best to put himself in the wrong. When he called his play *The Cat and the Cherub* it suggested at once an ideal of childhood, if not in Dresden China, at least in Chinese porcelain. The play is in fact the grimdest of tragedies, suggesting Mr. Kipling constantly.

Chim-Fang steals Hoo-Chee, the son of a rich merchant, hoping to obtain a reward for the child's return, which will enable him to marry the merchant's daughter, whom he will then sell to a high-binder. In the hunt for the child, a young man who loves the girl, and whose father means to buy her for him, attempts to search Chim-Fang's opium-den, where the child is really concealed. He is stabbed. From a woman who is a slave in the rich merchant's house, the father of the murdered man learns that Chim-Fang was the abductor of the child and almost surely the murderer of his son. The last scene of the play shows the father strangling Chim-Fang, after he is dead propping him up in a life-like attitude while a "foreign-devil" police officer passes, and talking Chinese philosophy to the corpse. The mongolian imperturbability which Mr. Fernald had to portray, doubtless aided him in restraining himself. As it is, his play is brutally and thrillingly direct; his humor, and there is plenty of it, dignified; and his sentiment firmly under control. The absolute silence of the father, when he finds his murdered son, is worth an hour's shrieking. The dialogue is concision itself. It is not exactly what people say off the stage; a great deal has been left out, but there is nothing left in which is not to be found in ordinary conversation. This compression is, we take it, the way to write realistic dialogue. (The usual way is to undress a child on the stage and prepare it for bed; the audience being expected to marvel at the play's fidelity to life.)

We are not prepared to say that others may not know more of Chinatown than does Mr. Fernald, but we doubt whether anyone, for a week or so, will produce so artistic, so strong, so satisfactory, and so American a play.

WITH TWO CHINESE DRAMAS simultaneously on the boards in New York there was a merry war on at once between Mr. Frohman and Mr. Hammerstein, each striving to prove that his play was the simon-pure pigtailed article, and the



rival manager's playwright had never set foot in Chinatown. Meanwhile the uncertainty is increased by young men of San Francisco, who through the private channel of letter-writing give assurance that neither Mr. Fernald nor Mr. Powers has touched the depths of Chinese life, and that Mr. Frank Norris, or someone else, is the only original and authentic Anglo-Chinese story-teller. This is a very healthy state of interest and rivalry, and makes one believe that in the flood of Mongolian fiction we are sure to have there will be some strong work.

SAN FRANCISCO, upon the invitation of Mr. Charles Frohman, and somewhat to its own discomfiture, is to be forced into what will be a most interesting dramatic experiment. It is not to be visited in the future by the travelling companies of the syndicate; in short, by none of the first-rate companies and none of the new plays. No one can blame Mr. Frohman, if what he says in the following forcible though inelegant quotation be true: "We have lost \$100,000 in San Francisco in the last two years. William H. Crane's receipts hardly paid the hotel bills of the company. This case is one out of many. San Francisco has always demanded first-class attractions. We send New York successes to San Francisco. The critics of the coast roast them and us, and then tell the public how much better their own stock companies can render the same piece. As San Francisco prefers cheap plays, we have decided to let her have them. If I can ship to San Francisco the manuscript of my ten-year-old plays at an expense of half a dollar for expressage and get fat royalties from local stock companies, why should I spend \$5,000 for railroad fares in sending John Drew and the Empire Stock Company out there to present the same things?"

San Francisco apparently was too devoted to its own stock companies to suit Mr. Frohman. Now it is to depend upon them entirely. The system will have a trial under the most favorable circumstances. Our hope is not, first of all, that new players may be discovered. The travelling actors are likely, we believe, in spite of the Californian critics, to act fully as well as the stock companies. But we do hope that the stock system may make it possible without extreme financial risk to bring out and experiment with new plays. A stock company can afford to give a play if it run a month: the syndicate must feel assured of a half-year.

San Francisco has already within the last year done something of this sort with the two Chinese plays, *The Cat and the Cberub* and *The First Born*. It supplied material for both Mr. Fernald and Mr. Francis Powers, and gave the latter's drama, *The First Born*, a hearty support lasting over many weeks. Mr. Frohman is now triumphantly carrying the play about the country (doubtless refusing to take it to San Francisco), but we doubt whether he

would have had the courage to bring it out as an experiment himself. The possible flexibility of the stock company system is, we believe, its great advantage, and we look to San Francisco to demonstrate this. There is no city in the country where it is more likely that undiscovered genius is awaiting the attention of the world.

IF MR. W. S. GILBERT had been an utter failure as a playwright, there would have been some obvious excuse for his recent attack on managers, actors, and critics. One would have understood it much as one understood the speeches with which a year or more ago Mr. Richard Mansfield embellished his dramatic performances. There is probably nothing so satisfactory to the feelings of a man temporarily in misfortune as to blackguard the people about him. Mr. Mansfield's attacks on Sir Henry Irving and other English actors who have been successful in this country, were directly traceable to professional jealousy and a very childish method of showing it.

Now—after Mr. Mansfield has ceased to cheapen himself and disgust even his admirers by such manners—comes forth Mr. W. S. Gilbert in a similar part. On the occasion of his recent failure as a dramatist in Birmingham, he saw fit to express himself in terms as forcible as they were foolish. To state that all critics are devoid of every moral, social, and critical virtue; that there are no theatrical managers, and that good actors, except in France, are equally as scarce, is not only in the worst taste in the world, but silly in the extreme. "If Pinero writes a play," he says, "and sends it to Sir Henry Irving, it is accepted, not because it is a good play, but because it is by Pinero." But if a stranger submits a play, however good it may be, it is never accepted, because the manager can't judge its merits.

That Sir Henry Irving was, in a measure, justified in declining Mr. Gilbert's play—if ever he had that privilege—is suggested by the unanimity with which the London critics have condemned it. Nine years have passed since the appearance of Mr. Gilbert's last previous effort, and the nine years have evidently contributed little towards his ability as a playwright. The plot of *The Fortune Hunter* is cheap, and the characterization wholly conventional. Even the dialogue—and there surely one might expect excellence—is neither light nor witty. In the face of these facts it is to be wondered if anything could have been more unwise than Mr. Gilbert's present attitude towards the managers and critics.



## AN EXPERIMENT IN CIVILIZATION

THERE came some time since to the person who may be described as the "present writer" in these columns, but who is just a plain I at home, the following letter. It speaks for itself.

NEW BOSTON, MASS., Sept. 11, 1897.

MY DEAR SIR:—I read your piece in the paper that a woman in our town takes, in which you spoke about the "Dead Level of Independence." I think it is so. I like your idea that people ought to know more about their intelligence, and that everybody knows something that he ought not to and that few men have the character to be ignorant, and when you said that every wide-awake village that had thoughtful people enough—people who were educated up to it, ought to organize an Ignoramus Club to defend the town from papers and books, I thought you would be glad to know that something has come of it, and that we have started the reform in our town. I'm president. I send you some of our by-laws and a programme.

Hoping that the good work may go on, I am,

Sincerely yours,

S. R. RUSSELL.

P. S.—The programme I send is not exactly as it was. The meetings are not as long. I have put some things from other programmes into it.

S. R. R.

That the public may have the benefit of this experiment in relieving the pressure upon the modern reader, I have copied from the by-laws and programme just mentioned what might prove suggestive.

## BY-LAWS.

1. This Club shall be known as the Ignoramus Club of New Boston.

4. Every member shall be pledged not to read the latest book until people have stopped expecting it.

5. The Club shall have a Standing Committee that shall report at every meeting on New Things That People Do Not Need to Know.

6. It shall have a Public Library Committee, appointed every year, to look over the books in regular order and report on Old Things That People Do Not Need to Know. (Committee instructed to keep the library as small as possible.)

8. No member (vacations excepted) shall read any book that he would not read twice. In case he does he shall be obliged to read it three times or pay a fine (three times price of book *net*.)

11. The Club shall meet weekly.

12. Any person of suitable age shall be eligible for membership in the Club, who, after a written examination in his deficiencies, shall appear, in the opinion of the Examining Board, to have selected

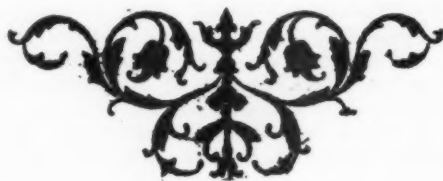
his ignorance thoughtfully and conscientiously and for the protection of his mind.

13. All persons thus approved shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting of the Club—the vote to be taken by ballot (any candidate who has not read B., The B.B.B. or Trilby—by acclamation).

Perhaps we have quoted from the by-laws sufficiently to give an idea of the spirit and aim of the club. We append the order of the meeting.

1. Called to order.
2. Reports of Committees.
3. General Confession (what members have read during the week).
4. FINES.
5. Review. Books I Have Escaped.
6. Essay. Things Plato Did Not Need to Know.
7. Omniscience. Helpful Hints. Remedies.
8. The Description Evil, followed by an illustration.
9. *Not* Traveling on the Nile. By One Who Has Been There.
10. Our Own Village Street. Stereopticon.
11. What Not to Know About Birds.
12. Myself Through an Opera Glass.
13. Sonnet. Botany.
14. Essay. Proper Treatment of Paupers, Insane, and Instructive People.
15. The Fad for Facts.
16. How to Organize a Club Against Clubs.
17. Paper. How to Humble Him Who Asks, "Have You Read ———?"
18. Essay, by youngest member. Infinity. An Appreciation.
19. Review. The Heavens in a Nutshell.
20. Useful Information. Causes and Effects.
21. Exercise in Silence. (Ten Minutes. Entire Club.)
22. Essay (Ten minutes). Encyclopedia Britannica. Summary.
23. Exercise in Wondering About Something. (Selected. Ten minutes. Entire Club.)
24. Debate. Which Is More Deadly, The Pen or the Sword?
25. Things Said To-Night That We Must Forget.
26. ADJOURNMENT (each member required to walk home alone looking at the stars).

GERALD STANLEY LEE.



MR. MEREDITH IN A  
NEW GUISE

AT last Mr. George Meredith has placed himself among the compromisers—the questers for general favor. He has made a selection from his poems with the special purpose of conciliating a shiftily sceptical public, and has put together a volume that is guaranteed not to call a blush to the cheek of the most precise rhetorician. Superficially judged, his work as a poet has certainly gained by editing. What remains has little of that roughness, challenging self-involvement of thought, and spottiness of surface that Mr. Meredith at times indulges in. Long wayward pieces of didacticism like the *Empty Purse* and the *Comic Spirit* have disappeared, and such insinuating lyrics of nature as *Woodland Peace* and *Tardy Spring* have come to be delightfully prominent. The result is that the ordinary reader who holds by Shelley and Keats and Tennyson finds in this volume much more nearly what he is prone to look for in verse than he finds in Mr. Meredith's volumes taken in due course. He finds less that brings him up short with a gasp. The gambols of *Jump to Glory Jane* and the Galliambics of *Phaethon* have alike ceased from troubling and the reader is at rest.

But what of the cost at which this superficial charm is secured? This is the question that will give the adept in Mr. Meredith pause. After all, is not a course in Mr. Meredith's wayward didacticism necessary for the full appreciation of even his simplest lyrics? Is not *Youth in Memory* a necessary propædæutic to the *Thrush in February*?

Probably the Meredith-adept is right in suggesting these doubts. Anyone familiar with the *Selections* alone will not get the full scope of Mr. Meredith's poetical criticism of life, and, more surely still, he will not comprehend the spiritual casuistry by which Mr. Meredith reaches the serene confidence in nature and in human destiny that pervades all his poetry. Nevertheless the *Selections* are justified. They represent alluringly the peculiar quality of Mr. Meredith's intuition of spiritual beauty and truth. "Let knowledge grow from more to more;" let the general reader provide himself at once with a full set of Mr. Meredith's volumes.

As a criticism of life, the distinguishing excellences of Mr. Meredith's poetry are its frank acceptance of science, its contempt for sentimental fallacies and romantic rhodomontade, its discreet agnosticism, its courageous, idealistic realism. A "reading of Earth" is what Mr. Meredith gives us—a reading that blinks none of the essential cruelties that modern science in its emphasis on the struggle for existence reveals so uncompromisingly. Nor does Mr. Meredith seek an anodyne against the thought of these cruelties in dreams of a future life that shall be like the present, only more cunningly framed to minister to egoism.

"These are our sensual dreams;  
Of the yearning to touch, to feel  
The dark Impalpable sure."

The refuge alike from an overwhelming sense of the apparent enmity of Nature, from despair at the evanescence of life and the treachery of the moments, and from the corrupting grief that flows from individual mischance, is found in ardent human sympathy, in loyal devotion to humanity in its whole scope, present and future, in "our bond with the numbers." Any one who thus identifies himself with the race will find Nature streaming power to him; he will be borne steadily onward by the mighty tendency at the heart of things. The whole great drama, both of external nature and of human struggle and joy and sorrow, will come to him to seem a perpetually victorious scheme for the development of spiritual worth.

"From flesh unto spirit man grows  
Even here on the sod under sun."

Such a frank acceptance, too, will bring with it carelessness of questions about the ultra-Beyond—questions of "the Whither whose echo is Whence"—"Questions that sow not nor spin." The Real—to this the wise man will devote himself; and he will then find that Nature seems favorable, without any need of mystically interpreting her with Carlyle into mere appearance.

The winged ratiocination by which Mr. Meredith reaches these conceptions of man and nature is contained in such long poems as *A Faith on Trial*, *Youth in Memory*, *Meditation under Stars*, and *The Empty Purse*,—poems not included in the *Selections*. Yet the mood to which these poems lead, is adequately represented,—for example, in *Woodland Peace*, *Outer and Inner*, *Hard Weather*, and *The Thrush in February*. These poems convey irresistibly "the individual bliss" that is Mr. Meredith's special achievement in his struggle to justify the ways of nature to man. Their spiritual beauty—their mood of high content—is something not easily matched elsewhere in modern poetry. They have a finer serenity, a more translucent atmosphere, an intenser æther, than Browning's optimistic poems, while they equal them in firmness of grasp on the actual and in vigor.

Like Browning, Mr. Meredith is scornful of romantic posing of all kinds, particularly of Hugoism and Byronism, and it seems perhaps unfortunate that this strain in his temper is so scantily represented in the *Selections*. Only one of his satirical pieces at the expense of cheap and showy sentiment is preserved,—namely, *The Whimper of Sympathy*, where the poet aspires to

"Dwell in yon dribble of dew . . .  
And live the young life of a twinkle."

*Hernani*, delightful in its burlesque of "the horn," is omitted; so, too, is *Manfred* with its ridicule of "bile & buskin attitude" and of the

"duel hugeous" between "spinsterdom" and the Byronic "clatterjaw." Nevertheless, Mr. Meredith's relation to romanticism is clearly indicated even in the present volume, or at least is plain to those who are on the watch for its appearance. Not a few of the poems suggest parallel poems of Wordsworth's or Shelley's, and seem studies of the same subjects in the idiom of a new age. Mr. Meredith's *Lark Ascending* has the intense beauty and passion of Shelley's *Skylark* without its febrileness and unreality; as compared with Wordsworth's *Skylark*, it pours out for us audibly the passion of love for earth and for human life that Wordsworth only didactically recommends. *Juggling Jerry* recalls Wordsworth's *Leechgatherer*; but whereas in Wordsworth's poem we get only a transmogrified old man, chemically beautified by the poet's imagination for our moral behoof, Mr. Meredith's poem makes us in love with life simply by its honest and sympathetic portrayal of human quality. *Youth in Memory* is an answer to Coleridge's exquisitely inconsolable *Youth and Age*; Coleridge's mournful refrain *When I was Young* masquerades in the motley of Mr. Meredith's *When I had Legs*; and the modern poet's aim is to show how from the point of view even of old age life may be poetically conceived and found fair and rewarding, and this, too, without the aid of any "fervour drunk from mystic hierophants," who deem the present world mire and "Yonder shores" alone divine. It must be noted, however, that this latter poem, *Youth in Memory*, is absent from the *Selections*, probably because of its length and its technical shortcomings.

For indeed on technical finish Mr. Meredith has vigorously insisted in these selections. In nearly every one of them beauty of form is in some sort or other conspicuous. The poems have been judged as wholes, and mere imaginative vigor of phrase or passionate intensity of conception has not sufficed to secure for a poem acceptance; clearness and firmness of outline, harmonious subordination of detail, and forthrightness in the development of the subject—whether it be a mood or an action—have uniformly been required. As a consequence, there is little of the spottiness of surface that has so often disfigured Mr. Meredith's poetry; specific details and separate images are not worrisomely eager for notice; jerkiness and irregularity of movement have almost disappeared.

Nevertheless, Mr. Meredith's temperamental restlessness may still be traced in his art,—in his rhythms, if nowhere else. When he is really on the scent of beauty or truth, he can never be content with the dilatory movement of the five-foot iambic line. He must flash along with the help of octosyllabics or of irregular anapaestic or dactylic measures. Nearly the only poems (apart from *Modern Love*) where he uses the decasyllabic line, are the idealistic and visionary *Hymn to Colour*, the playful *Ballad of Fair Ladies*, the mythical *Appeasement of*

*Demeter*, and the sonnets. In general, it may be questioned whether Mr. Meredith has command of long musical periods. Not that he has not a very sure musical ear; not that he does not give us exquisite collocations of sound and swift-fleeting rhythms that are full of subtle variability and shadows of turning. But breadth of musical effect and intricately prolonged harmonies are rarely found in his verse. The Sonnets, despite their superb imagery and their passionate compression of phrase, can hardly be deemed successful. Rhythmically, they are apt to fall to pieces; often they sin recklessly against the strict laws of the sonnet-form; and they usually seem either self-conscious and brilliant *tours-de-force* or somewhat halting pieces of amateurish sincerity. Of the imaginative beauty of *Lucifer in Starlight* no one is likely to doubt; and yet after all, the sonnet leaves the impression of being an immensely clever academic exercise.

On the other hand, in his ballads, Mr. Meredith's power seems almost savagely real, and his manner and progress inevitable. The three most important narrative poems in the *Selections* are *The Day of the Daughter of Hades*, *The Young Princess*, and *The Nuptials of Attila*. Verily, they march straight on, if poems ever so marched; their union of pageantry and sheer beauty with dramatic rapidity and with economy of phrase are remarkable indeed in these days of mock-ballads and psychological dramatic lyrics. Browning, when he purports to give us action, is prone to giving us merely the transverse section of a soul that is planning an action or recalling an action. Mr. Meredith gives us the veritable swift coursing past by act and incident with the flashing of sunlight upon them, and with the momentary glimpses of foreground and character that the onward sweep of the passion allows. The atmosphere, too, of each ballad is perfectly tempered to the fate at issue and to the historical setting. In the *Young Princess* we are in southern France in the days of the Courts of Love, and the air is full of the songs of nightingales, the fragrance of roses and orange-blossoms, and the silvery echoes of chivalry. In the *Nuptials of Attila* we are caught in the swirl of passion that in the fifth century swept whole tribes of barbarians from the steppes and plateaus of eastern Europe, west and south, over the civilization of the Roman empire. In both poems, despite the vividness and splendor of the glimpses that we get of the historical setting, there is never a moment of delay over mere description; the tragic action, with its absorbing personal interest, speeds on unerringly from first to last.

These ballads and his *Readings of Earth* seem what is most distinctively beautiful and significant in Mr. Meredith's verse; and it is difficult to doubt that at least these among his poems will, age in and age out, hold their own with lovers of literature, and that not even his greatness as a novelist will suffice to keep Mr. Meredith from fame as a poet.

LEWIS E. GATES.



## EVENING

THE air is full of whisperings,  
And gentle-voiced content to-day;  
The vesper-sparrow lights and sings  
A hymn of jay—an evening lay.

Sometimes the slumb'ring breeze awakes,  
And waves the shadows of the trees;  
Or moves along the thorny brakes;  
Or shakes the daisies o'er the leas.

Soft valleys wind by sunny streams,  
Where cardinal-flowers limn their plumes;  
And Summer, full of golden dreams,  
Nods by a bed of tansy blooms.

The flood of Evening's glory fills  
The quiet places of a wood;  
The hum of bees, the purling rills,  
Speak a sweet faith, that life is good.

Tall meadow-rues, in green and white,  
Toss their proud coronals in glee;  
The sun has robbed them like the light  
That graceful, lovely company.

And underneath a spreading tree  
I saw the yarrow, hardly fair,—  
Its bloom was dim, but oh! to see  
What leafy beauty it could wear!

So still the scene, that it would seem  
Soft clouds would ever float above  
Bright with the glory of the dream  
That joy is alway; life is love.

JOHN STUART THOMSON.

## THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

THERE were once two young girls who lived with their parents in a flat, in Chicago.

Their father was an honorable but dishonest city-politician. He drew a large salary for sitting in his grimy office and smoking with brother-politicians on week days; and for marching to picnics and funerals with green ribbons tied around him, on Sundays.

Their mother read the woman's page in the newspaper and looked out of the window, in the morning; and in the afternoon, she shopped down town with her youngest daughter or with one of her own friends. She had a great many friends, and nearly all of them had not only the same tastes, but the same large bulk as herself.

The younger daughter had graduated from the grammar-school. She had not wished to enter the high-school, so she was now enjoying a halcyon freedom.

The elder daughter had also graduated from the

grammar-school, but, although she had then gone to a private school, she enjoyed almost as much freedom, for instead of studying, as before, the subtle and various arithmetics and Latin grammar, she now studied History of Art, Political Economy, and Literature. All these were treated with great uniformity in neatly classified text-books as easy to understand as a shoe-store's annual catalogue.

The younger daughter's name was Rosie. The elder daughter's name had been Clara; but she had changed it to Dorothy.

Rosie's hair was curled in thick bunches on either side of her face, and looped as low as possible in the back of her neck. Dorothy's hair was parted smoothly, and done in a neat coil at the back of her head.

One afternoon their mother came home from down-town bringing a new pink ribbon collar. She had snatched it from a bargain bin in a dry-goods store just in time to prevent a powerful Jewess next her from getting it.

As she flung herself into a chair scattering small parcels in every direction she exclaimed, "Girls, I brought home the cutest thing in a collar I've seen this spring. You can decide between you which is to have it. There it is—rolled under the instrument."

Rosie crept under the piano and opened the parcel. Although pink was her favorite colour, she was disappointed in the collar on account of an unexpected cascade of blue lace in the back. She had small hopes that her sister would want it, as she noticed her regarding it with a cold and lusterless eye. But as she saw her mother's face showing signs of alarm she exclaimed, "Is n't it stunning?" and as her sister continued silent she went on, "and so out of the common."

"Well, that colour of pink is n't becoming to me," said Dorothy, "so, if you like it, you can take it, Rosie."

"Of course I like it," said Rosie stoutly; "it's too pretty for anything," and she put it on and wore it that very evening to the great admiration of Judie Metzler who came with his acquaintance, Wallace Shepard, to go bicycle-riding.

Judie Metzler and Wallace Shepard had been in the same room in the public school with Rosie and Dorothy.

Judie Metzler was a German boy. He had been put into long trousers and Derby hats when he was only twelve years old. The hats were always too large for him and rested on the tops of his ears. After he had finished the grammar-school he burst upon the business world in the capacity of an errand-boy in a drug-store. He did not care for Dorothy and he openly characterized her change of name as stuck-up. He had admired Rosie from his tenderest years, and it was his magnificent custom to treat both her and her sister to soda-water at least three times a week, besides almost daily bicycle rides.

Wallace Shepard was the son of General Wallace Shepard, famed throughout the United States as "Shiloh Shepard." When he had worn knickerbockers his legs had always been the envy of all the boys in his dancing-class. He had a horse of his own and rode with his father on the Lake-shore drive before breakfast every morning; and at the college preparatory school, where he had gone from the grammar-school, he was the captain of the football team. In short, his life had been one long pageant, and it must be acknowledged that, even for Rosie, his presence lent to any occasion a tinge of gaiety that Judie Metzler's could never bestow.

Wallace Shepard regarded Dorothy's change of name as the struggle of a noble nature to rise toward higher things. He considered her a jewel in the dust-heap of her family, and he attributed all the refinement of her dress to delicacy of feeling. A dark tailor-made dress with a white collar and cuffs, and a calm, sharp-edged sailor hat, were evidences to him of a simple, lofty, and noble nature in their wearer; and it was with inward admiration for the wisdom of his judgment that he regarded the pettiness and frivolity of Rosie, as outwardly expressed in her pink and blue collar. He felt that to rescue Dorothy from the flat would be creditable both to his mental acuteness and his spiritual breadth.

In the course of two or three years, and many bicycle and skating expeditions, this feeling increased so rapidly that, as, on account of the hard times, Wallace Shepard did not go to college, but into the real-estate business—he married Dorothy soon after Rosie and Judie Metzler were engaged.

Mrs. Shepard was delighted with Dorothy. She considered her carriage and her spotless self alone a sign of the utmost superiority. When General Shepard said, "That little sister of hers is a sweet little thing," she felt that, if the influences of army life were broadening they were also degrading.

Dorothy's family took her engagement very lightly. As her mother had, at the time of her marriage to her husband, been engaged to six other gentlemen, it will be seen that she did not regard engagement as a soul-struggle.

Dorothy, herself, did not regard it in this way. She felt somewhat as George Fourth might under the same circumstances, complacent and stolidly satisfied. But as she was much thinner than that gentleman this passed for the restraint of sensibility.

Judie Metzler pitied Wallace. He might, with more justice, have pitied Dorothy, if he had considered that life for a wolf, in the most perfectly fitting sheep's clothing, among other sheep might be dull.

Certainly Dorothy became very much exhausted in spirit by the weight of the alien tasks she was obliged to assume. She listened to long orchestration-poems, and frequently alleged a preference for one called "Joseph," an endless architectural Ger-

man composition expressing the wandering in the desert. She took singing lessons, and learned many a Swedish lullaby and Moravian love-song, all by painstaking English-speaking authors. She threw herself, soul-and-body, into settlement work and the bridging of social chasms; and she spread her ignorance of Latin far-and-wide among the poor of the city. Under the burden of all these assumed delights she gradually fell into a comatose condition spiritually, in which she was unable to tell what really were her pleasures.

As for Rosie's pleasures, they were both intensified and varied when, through fortunate speculation on the Board of Trade, Judie Metzler grew very wealthy. He showered diamond rings and sealskin sacques upon her. She went to the most expensive summer-hotels, where she wore a new dress every day. She shot the chutes and sailed weekly to Milwaukee on the steamer. She drank all the soda-water she wanted, and she never ceased to laugh at the topical songs of the middle-aged uncle in spectacular plays; and so she lived happy ever afterward.

E. F. WYATT.

## COBWEBS FROM A LIBRARY CORNER

### I

#### AN OPEN LETTER

**D**EAR ANDREW LANG: I beg of you  
To take a rest a week or two.  
Go fishing in some Scottish burn,  
Or at your golfing take a turn;  
Please sleep a little every day,  
And do not work so hard, I pray.  
For I, dear Lang, have liked you much—  
You have a very master's touch—  
But, oh, you print so often that  
I hardly know where you are at.  
Your books flow in so fast that I  
Cannot keep up, howe'er I try.  
My shelves o'erflow, sir, with your wit,  
And I'd be loath to part with it;  
But many a page I cannot scan,  
Because I am a busy man  
And cannot read your wondrous art.  
I've time to cut your leaves apart,  
And nothing more—do n't look askance,  
But give a busy man a chance!  
Go off and rest a week or two,  
Dear Andrew Lang, I beg of you.

### II

#### THE GLOOMSTER

So much of gloom flows from your pen,  
I cannot help but think  
Your veins hold naught of blood; I ken  
They're merely filled with ink.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

## A MODEST PROPOSAL TOUCHING THE NEWS- PAPERS AND AN AMER- ICAN ACADEMY

**T**HAT modern journalism needs an antidote of sound literary correction for its grievous humors of mind and body is a contention easy for all but the aesthetically unambitious to concede. Though the critics of the newspapers, according to De Quincey in the once famous essay on Style, began with Lord Oxford in the last century, if not earlier with somebody else, the newspaper itself has prospered ever since in its sins. One difficulty undiminished by mere criticism, and excellent as a point of departure for the censor, is noted by De Quincey himself in his polysyllabic but well-meaning way. "Formerly," he says, "the natural impulse of every man was spontaneously to use the language of life; the language of books was a secondary attainment not made without effort. Now, on the contrary, the daily composers of newspapers have so long dealt in the professional idiom of books as to have brought it home to every reader in the nation who does not violently resist it by some domestic advantage. Time was, within our own remembrance, that if you should have heard in passing along the street, from any old apple-woman, such a phrase as 'I will *avail myself* of your kindness,' forthwith you would have shied like a skittish horse." I do not myself remember to have shied at this phrase from old apple-women, probably because in American old apple-women are more likely to use the idiom of Ireland or Italy, and the wives of people who sell apples by the wholesale, or chewing gum, or pork, if they do not themselves fix the idiom of the newspaper, talk in that idiom more and more. Whether newspaper English derive itself from the vulgar, or be itself responsible for the vulgar, it suffers equally from that pretentiousness which lacks the literary sense for homely things. For both readers and makers of newspapers in these days there is no "violent domestic advantage," no formative period between the language of childhood and that of books. American boys and girls, as most instructors in English realize, must be weaned carefully, not from the specific candor of childhood, but from bookishness. A list of phrases might be prepared (such as elevator for lift, subscribe to for take in, etc.), to show that the American idiom already lacks some of the simplicity of real English, because in most American homes the household idiom is obsolescent, and the great and powerful, but for this time perverted, newspaper is the pervasive influence. There has been no influence so pervasive since the days of that noblest of all man's achievements in prose, the English Bible: do the editors realize, I wonder—does Mr. Whitelaw Reid or does Mr. James Gor-

don Bennett realize that he exerts an influence infinitely greater than that of King James and all his translators?

Is it not a solemn apostrophe? Certainly it is not an impertinent one, for the editor and the academician, for whom I should like to speak, work in the same medium of English prose. Whether it is the copy of the reporter or the theme of the schoolboy, the business is the same: to make it grammatical and efficient. The newspaper's share of the business, though most of the newspaper's critics are not aware of it, is done with infinite pains. Every paper maintains a corps of "copy-editors," whose work consists solely in the correction and improvement of the "stories" which reporters bring in from their forays among us of the outer world. The task is sometimes excessively hard, for what with diffuseness arising from habits of grabbing for space, what with verbosity, perversity and ignorance of adequate and simple English the copy reader finds the reporter in most cases his unruly and inevitable enemy. With the writer of college themes and their correctors there is more likely to be coöperation and personal influence. It is the less fortunate editor who is driven to taking refuge in cast-iron rules, or in profanity,—and the inefficiency of one and the other is by turns pathetic or amusing. There is some attempt at persuasion, at exhortation,—as when the city-editor, when the reporters come to him from the "assignment-book," entreats with a good deal of rhetoric more or less wide of the mark, a "pleasant" half column on this, or a "sober" account of that. But too often the reporter's notions of pleasantry and sobriety are at variance with the city-editor's, and the city-editor falls back on his rules and his profanity.

The rules are for the most part eminently respectable: indeed the whole grammatic system, barring the profanity, is respectable. The point is that it should be considered a case for rules, that there are rules, and that the rules are formulated without some intelligent spirit at the back of them. There are rules, to the sorrow of many a copy-editor be it mentioned, which were respectable in the days of the *Evening Post* under Bryant, whose "index expurgatorius" (whether or no it was a spurious copy that caused the controversy) once, it may be recalled, excited the indignation of the philologist Mr. Fitzedward Hall. It is well Mr. Hall cannot see some of the index expurgatorius's still in vogue. All the newspaper-office rules which I have been able to examine contain clauses respectably and ineffably effete. It is true that with the spirit of many of these rules nobody can quarrel; many of them are really sensible, as all those are, for instance, of which there are not a few, that make for brevity and simplicity of expression; many of them appear in the pages of most rhetorics. But it is a fact that they are apt to cling more pertinaciously in the pages of the newspaper "rules" than in the college rhet-

orica. The editor in most cases is the more conservative force. Curiously enough, it is always the editor who ends with the literary idiom and mediocrity. Not slang and not the commonplace, he cries; in vain, for he attempts to legislate disingenuously and uniformly. "Save in formal court reports," he says, for instance, "the words 'rape,' 'incest,' 'seduce,' and words of similar character should be avoided. Use rather the expressions 'felonious assault,' 'undue intimacy with a relative,' 'betrayed,' etc. With most of us the remedy might be a more radical matter. Again, I know one editor who in dealing with a very dreadful murder, objected to the word "shirt"; and there is a story, which, whether apocryphal or not, may serve to reduce the system to its absurdity, of a paper, in Boston, I think, which everywhere forbade the use of the word "blood." The extraordinary polysyllables resorted to for substitutes must have surprised its readers, even in Boston. The ultimate objection to the system is of course that the household idiom which De Quincey commends does, whether in one way or another, disappear. A reporter, once, with better instincts than many of his kind, asked a copy-editor, in my presence, "how do you spell 'hobble-de-hoy'?"—to which the copy-editor replied sententiously that it did not matter how you spelled hobble-de-hoy, since hobble-de-hoy would not "get through" the copy-desk anyhow. The collegian, the "copy-editor" of the college student's themes, would have welcomed hobble-de-hoy. The difference is that, in the more enlightened universities, there are nowadays not rules but simple principles, which from their very simplification are sometimes amazingly successful even with unpromising material.

Why can not the academician help the editor in this matter? Essentially there is no reason, except the editor's conservatism, why their coöperation should not be feasible. It is essentially an extension of the principle of skilled labor and of specialization. No city-editor is expected to master the principles on which the advertisements of the paper are solicited and apportioned; or to settle the principles on which a play is damned or puffed; or to know intimately the principles on which the Wall street news is gathered and written. But the old fallacy prevails that every man, over and above his other accomplishments, knows how to use properly, and how to teach other people to use properly that difficult and ticklish instrument, the English language. It is a fallacy that, until twenty years ago, kept English out of the curriculum of Harvard College, and makes it even at this day slow of introduction into some so-called universities. It has been shown to be none the less a fallacy that only by years of patience in the teaching of English something like efficiency has been evolved, and that only in our own day has it been almost demonstrated that something like style may be taught.

The coöperation of the editor and the academician—whom it might have been more sympathetic to call the humanist—suggests also this interesting synthesis: why should there not be here the nucleus of an American Academy? What the French Academy has done for French most persons admit; it has helped to make it terse and clear, an efficient instrument; it has developed form and repressed freaks. If it were a question of doing away with, or of conventionalizing, Burton or Sir Thomas Browne, or William Blake, we might insist rather on the contention that with an Academy English would have missed the free glories of English poetry and the growth of many an English oddity not the least considerable of its glories. It is not, however, a question of Blakes, or Montaignes or Mme. de Sévigné, but of the American reporter, and reporters are, or had better be, mediocrities. If a reporter is not, in the French sense, a mediocrity, he is troublesome; he hands in erratic copy or uses "editorial expressions." A reporter is not supposed to have an irrepressible opinion of his own; neither is he more valuable for having an unmistakable individuality. An Academy is the most efficient means for the correction of the average, and that the average reporter requires correction the whole system of newspaper-making goes to show.

Does not the idea, at any rate, of such an Academy of American editors and collegians present a picture of particular advantages? The growth of a literary conscience in Mr. Pulitzer, the reaction of Mr. Hearst upon Professor Barrett Wendell, Professor Hill and Mr. James Gordon Bennett arm in arm in Printing House Square, not to mention the arbitration of difficulties in "shall" and "will" and the improvement of the reportorial vocabulary, would be some of the edifications of the new regime. It is to be hoped at least that these suggestions may be looked upon favorably as offering an improvement on the system under which most papers now struggle, and from which the whole reading population of the country—the home, the college, and the papers themselves in their embryo reporters—receive the very doubtful benefits.

PITTS DUFFIELD.

## YOU AND I

**Y**OU for pleasure, I for pain,  
I for trust and you for joy;  
I for loss, but you for gain,  
I build up that you destroy.

WILLIAM THEODORE PETERS.









## JED'S MINISTRY

THERE was an air of spaciousness about Jed's broad freckled face. From the end of his heavy chin to the roots of his red hair, growing low over an unwrinkled forehead, seemed but a wide and pleasant playground for the varying expressions of his unvarying good nature. The short lines at the corners of his mouth tended upward; his blue eyes were living springs of twinkling lights.

He was not handsome; his figure was far too short and blunt and coarse in texture. His life had been twenty-four years long, but in that span he had made few friends of mature years, for he was called dull of wit and slow of understanding. So he was. But children loved him; so did dogs and all dumb creatures. Dogs with confirmed pessimistic views on the knotty problems of life would yet come to him uninvited, snuggling their cool muzzles in his hand, looking wistfully into his eyes. And he found great happiness in sitting in the warm sunshine, with his favorites around him.

Not that he was lazy. The comforts he gave his mother cost much hard labor, and he must perforce work with his short red hands, rather than with his reason. For his reason would not always lead him as his conscience told him he should go; so he came to trust in it less and less.

Even his mother, when she indulged herself, as mothers may of right, in talking of her children, spoke most of Phil, Jed's tall elder brother, whose wit was keen and understanding good. Phil she had destined for God's ministry, and she spoke and thought and prayed of him as one day dealing the hard, white truth to men, who must listen and believe. Phil had tacitly agreed to her plans, for he was a lazy lover of domestic peace, but he kept deferring a beginning. At last he went to San Antonio for his health's sake, and the brutal story came back that he had been shot to death at a faro table, because of some slight disagreement with the dealer. His body was buried at home, and with it much of the brightness which had shone over the mother's simple life.

When that was all over, she turned the hopes of her aching heart upon Jed, who had gone on working about home at odd jobs. She thought about it a great deal before she spoke, for she believed implicitly in Jed's dullness. At last she told him that she wanted him to succeed to her hope of Phil's ministry.

Jed was dazed. But he listened while she talked, until he saw her unwavering earnestness.

"Shucks, mammy," he said; "I ain't fit to make a minister out of."

She had apprehended this, and had prepared herself to meet him with an attack upon his weakest point—his own great love of her.

"But, Jeddy," she said, "I've been livin'

years on the hope that a son of mine would do some good in the world, an' now there ain't but you left." It was not a delicate saying, but Jed was not discriminating.

"Just workin' an' takin' care of you is good enough for me, mammy," he argued. "An' what kind of a minister would I make, anyhow? Just look at me! It takes a scholar to preach, do n't it? I'd have to have more sense than I've got now, sure." That was the sore point—sorer with her than with him, for he had long known the deep content of a warm heart and a quiet mind.

"Of course," she agreed, "you won't make the kind of a minister Phil would've. That ain't to be exactly expected. You're so—you're so different from Phil. But I've set my heart on it so. Try an' think about it, Jeddy, for me. I've spoke to the minister about it, here, an' he'll help you all he can. He'll show you how to go to work about it, an' what to do. You just think about it for mammy's sake."

In the afternoon Jed neglected his work, that he might go into the deep woods to think. His dog went with him—an ancient white bulldog, who hobbled along on three legs, carrying the scars of many valorous battles. With his back against a giant elm, Jed spoke to his companion.

"What do you think of that, Bull? Me preachin'! That's a good one, ain't it?" Bull closed his eyes and ruminated dreamily; then licked his heavy chops with an appearance of great relish.

"You mean the livin' would be good, you old sinner?" Jed cried. "Well, mebbe it would. But I've knowed preachers that was n't much overfed, by their looks. No, Bull; you'll have to talk harder sense than that." But Bull shook his stumpy tail and signified that he had no further arguments to offer. So Jed lay flat upon his back and listened to what the birds overhead had to say about it. He was on friendly terms with them, as with every living thing that knew how to value him. Noisy jays and quarrelsome woodpeckers were striving boisterously and boastfully in the elm's branches.

"You fellers seem to need preachin' bad enough; do n't they, Bull?" he said presently; "but I ain't fit to preach to jay-birds an' red-heads, let alone humans." He lay for a long time, his mind drifting idly and uncontrolled, only to come back to this at last:

"Shucks! Mammy wants me to. 'T won't do no great harm to try, will it, Bull?" He got to his feet and went toward home, by way of the Rev. Mr. White's. Him Jed found in a worn dressing-gown and red slippers, caring for a wailing baby. He was a diffident little man, filled with a strong desire to give no offense to any one.

"Your mother was speaking to me of your—of your wishes about your calling," he said, when he had taken Jed into his dingy little parlor. "Your aspirations do you great credit, and—" The

baby's cries swelled ominously, and the reverend gentleman began pacing the floor with his struggling burden. "Hu-u-sh, hu-u-sh," he said; then, "Mattie, come and take your little sister a moment, while I talk to the gentleman."

"Let me take the kid," Jed said; "I can mostly quiet 'em." He took the child in his arms tenderly, laying his red cheek against the pale little one, and walked the floor until the cries fell away to slow sobs and quiet sleep.

"That was kindly done," Mr. White said, deeply grateful; "now let me relieve you of her."

"No; let me tote her a while. I like 'em," Jed whispered. "I'll be careful of her, an' you go on talkin'."

"I was saying that your mother had explained your desire to me," the little man began, but Jed interrupted him.

"'Tain't my desire, it's her'n," he said. "It's mammy that's stuck on me preachin'. I would n't have had nothin' to do with it but for her."

"Yes," Mr. White echoed; "it was your mother's wish, and that—that does you the more credit. She is a good woman, your mother. I told her that I would gladly aid you as might—as might lie in my power."

"So she was tellin' me," Jed said softly, not to disturb his charge; "an' I thought I'd give it a try, anyhow. I thought I'd come to you to see how I'd have to begin. I reckon it'll be hard work, won't it?"

"Yes," the minister answered; "you would better make up your mind to that beforehand, then you will not be disappointed. I will give you some books for your reading from my shelves, and do what I can."

"How will they do?" Jed questioned; "will I be examined like in school?"

"That's it," Mr. White nodded. "When you are ready we will make application, and there will be a committee appointed to come down and examine into your qualifications and fitness."

"Qualifications and fitness," Jed repeated, with a quiet smile of enjoyment; "that sounds pretty good. I do n't reckon they'll find much. But you give me the books an' I'll give her a try, anyhow, just to please mammy."

Mr. White went to his bookshelves and examined the dingy volumes with a puzzled expression, biting his lips and cracking the joints of his thin fingers.

"I suppose you have some familiarity with the bible itself?" he queried.

"Oh, sure," Jed answered; "I know the New Testament part mostly by heart, with mammy's readin' an' mine. I've got a good remembrance, if that's any help."

"You will find it a great help," the other said; "you will find much depending upon a good memory."

He took from his shelves a small black volume, blowing an accumulation of dust from its top.

"You can take this," he said; "and here is a commentary to aid you in your further reading of the Bible. You would better begin with this book, perhaps, reading it as carefully as you can. And if—and if you have an English grammar available, and a good rhetoric—"

"What's rhetoric?" Jed interrupted. The minister explained.

"Oh!" Jed said; "I reckon I can find one in Phil's books. Phil was great on that."

Relieved of the baby, he took up the volume tendered him. It was *The Problem of Religious Progress*. He found, with great satisfaction, that it would just fit into his coat pocket.

"I'll just pack that with me," he thought, "an' when I'm workin' I'll likely get a chance to look at it once in a while."

"I'm much obliged," he said aloud; "I'm goin' to give her a try, sure," and the little minister's thin hand ached under the genial pressure bestowed upon it.

It was late at night, when his work about home was done, that he found time, in the quiet of his bedroom, for his first glance within the charmed black covers of his books. He felt that he was walking on holy ground, treading paths which were to lead to life and light, and, most of all, to his mother's happiness. He looked here and there through the yellowing pages, his hand trembling, his heart beating fast. His dog was unused to this, and came snuffing for attention.

"Look out, Bull," Jed said; "you let me alone a minute, ole feller, till I get the hang of this a little." A vague uneasiness came upon him as he turned the fluttering leaves. It was half an hour before he spoke; then,

"Say, Bull, this is great!" he cried. "Listen here. Do you ketch on to this?" and he read aloud slowly:

"The Kantian philosophy, rising little later than German Rationalism, exerted an important and relatively ennobling influence upon rationalistic theology, and upon other currents of modern thought. Jerusalem, Bull! How's that?" The dog heaved a long sigh.

"Makes ye tired, does it?" Jed questioned. "Well, then, here's another: 'While the fundamental elements of Christianity have been so fully attested and vindicated by the best modern thought, and even by candid modern skepticism, on the other hand, radical unbelief has demonstrated its poverty and powerlessness for good.' Lordy! do n't that give you a belly-ache?" Bull did his best to signify assent.

Another hour went swiftly by, bringing him a throbbing headache. The deep-voiced old clock down stairs warned him of half-past eleven.

When he lay in bed, staring up into the darkness, he brought his scattered wits together.



"I reckon that ain't the way to begin, skippin' round like I done," he thought; "of course it ain't. I'll just have to go at it head first, an' get it. I can do that, I reckon, if I can't sense it all just yet."

The next day he must cut wood, two miles from home. His book was in the pocket of his coat, but he found no time for it through the long morning. At mid-day he ate his dinner hurriedly, then started to find a quiet spot where he might begin his labor of conquest. He had not gotten his book clear of his pocket, when a shaggy dog came up to him, holding one forefoot helplessly in air, whining.

"Hello, Sport, old boy," Jed saluted him, for they had acquaintance with one another. "What's the matter with your foot?" The beast held it higher toward him, and he took it tenderly in his hands. "Why, it's broke, Sport," he said, when he had examined it carefully; "we'll have to fix it, sure, if you'll hold still." He found some rude splints, and tore bandages from his handkerchief. When the operation was over, he sighed, for the woodchoppers were beginning their afternoon's work.

At night, as he drew near home, a bit of a boy hailed him excitedly.

"Say, Jed! Jed! Come along of me! Quick! There's a rabbit down here, in a ole log. Golly, he's a whopper! Bull's got him run in tight, an' he's just a-waitin' for us."

Jed's heart rose within him. "Come on, son!" he cried, "an' we'll snake him out in a jiffy, an' you can take him home an' keep him. Where is he? You go ahead." As he started to run, the book in his pocket bumped heavily against his side and brought him to a standstill.

"Hold on, youngster," he cried, "I forgot. I can't go. I've got to go home. I've got some work to do." He turned back into the road, leaving the boy in wonder. He laughed, as he muttered aloud:

"A pretty sight a minister of the gospel would make, snakin' a rabbit out of a holler log, with a kid an' a three-legged bull-dog dancin' around." Then presently he added: "'T won't do, Jed; you've got more things to learn than out of books, if you're goin' to make things go." While he sat at supper, Bull came home, swinging the dead rabbit in his stout-jaws.

"Oh, say, Bull; you ought n't to 've done that," Jed remonstrated. "Did n't you know no better 'n that, after all I've told ye? You would n't 've done it, neither, if I'd been along. What's the use, killin' things?" He had to take the little creature in his arms, stroking its disturbed coat back to softness, and then give it decent burial. All this took time. It was late when he could shut himself in his room with his new work. When that time came, he began doggedly at the first words of

his book, proceeded slowly, not assimilating, but engulfing. When his head nodded with sleep, he had a parrot's control of five dull pages.

There were other days like unto this. He went about his work, whatever it chanced to be, his brave heart beating time to the flow of heavy words which he recited over and over again, that they might not escape him between his hours of reading. And when his hours of work were done, his time was not always his own. A sick child in the neighborhood would cry for Jed to come and play, and then he must needs make long trips over the fields and through the depths of the woods, seeking out the fairest of summer flowers or the sweetest of ripening berries to lighten the child's burden of endurance. And he hardly remembered such an uninterrupted succession of accidents happening to his wards among the beasts. But by and by he took "The Problem of Religious Progress" back to its owner, stepping proudly.

"I've got that feller, sure," he said to Mr. White; "he can never get away from me, unless my remembrance fools me. Can you give me something else?"

The little man's face showed deep relief.

"Do you think you know it?" he asked. He thought, "Perhaps he is not the fool he looks." He had not wished to inflict the pain of discouragement, thinking that Jed would abandon his undertaking when he realized its difficulties.

"Sure!" Jed insisted. "Want to hear me say it?"

"No, no," Mr. White hastened to say. "Here are other works I have selected for you. And don't neglect the grammar."

There were two long years of this, years through whose dreary length Jed never wavered, though they brought the first anxious furrows to his forehead and the first lack of color to his cheeks. Oh, no; he never wavered; it was for his mother.

Not that he kept his old placid content. He could realize dully that he had no understanding of what was passing into the great dim cavern of his memory, and he had a vague idea that this should be otherwise.

"Say," he queried once of Mr. White; "will they—those committee fellers—will they examine me about the bible, too?"

"Surely," his director answered; "and they will want to know as much as possible of your convictions."

"Convictions?" Jed repeated; "I ain't never been convicted."

Mr. White flushed. "Your doctrinal convictions; your—your understanding of the doctrinal relations of the bible's teachings. They will want to be well satisfied upon that point."

Jed was silent for a few moments, with the dancing lights in his eyes overclouded.

"I mean," he said slowly—"I mean about what the bible says. You see, I can understand

that, 'specially the New Testament part, like when it says, 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' or something like that. Why, anybody can sense that—even me. It even seems sometimes, when I'm layin' on my back in the woods, like I could pretty near say them kind of things myself. But I'll be dogged if I can ketch on to what these fellers say in the books."

As his reading went on, his perplexity increased.

"Look here," he asked again, "how do you reckon them old fellers—Paul, an' Peter, an' Him—Christ. I mean—how do you reckon they preached before these books was wrote? That's what I do n't sec."

"They were—they were led of God," Mr. White answered, as briefly as he could. He had gradually come to feel that he was not altogether at ease under the boy's questions.

"Of course," Jed assented; "I might have knowed that." Then he added, irrepressibly, "If a feller now could be led that way, he'd be right in it, would n't he?"

Then the fateful application for a committee was made. Mr. White was appointed, with two strippling pastors from neighboring towns. They were to meet Jed in the parlor of the village church.

He dressed himself in his poor best. His mother had to button his collar: his hand trembled so. And hers behaved hardly better. She laid her thin hands on his shoulders, looking down into his face, for she was taller than he. Jed hardly knew the look in her eyes: he had not seen it since Phil died. Her old eyes had always held kindness and warm affection for her younger son: now they gleamed with a fond pride.

"You'll do the best you can, won't you, Jeddy, for mammy's sake?" she whispered. There was something the matter with Jed's speech; he could only grip her hand hard before he marched resolutely down the graveled pathway toward the gate.

The visiting clergymen smiled perplexedly when they were introduced to their candidate. The three ministers talked among themselves, leaving Jed to his hopes and fears for a few minutes. Then the Reverend Mr. Lathrop, from Whitesville, just up the river, squared his shoulders and voice.

"Perhaps we would do well," he said, "to discover first what has been the character and direction of your preparatory studies. What general acquaintance have you, my boy, with the writers on homiletics?" He was perhaps two years Jed's senior.

"Homy—" Jed said; then his voice clogged in his throat.

"Homiletics," Mr. Lathrop repeated, and fixed his confident eyes on Jed's paling face.

Jed's lips were hot and dry, his brain a confused whirl, and his heart throbbed so wildly that he could feel its jarring movement through his whole body.

"Shucks!" he gasped at last, "I dunno what you mean."

The pause was awkward. Then the other member of the committee said smoothly:

"Take your time. There is no hurry. We can get at this slowly. Rational theology, now. We can save time by finding what you have been reading, so we may know how to examine you. What have you read upon rational theology?"

Jed's groping brain caught at the words.

"The Kantian philosophy, rising little later than German Rationalism, exerted an important and relatively ennobling influence upon rationalistic theology, and upon other currents of modern thought," he quoted from a division heading of his first book.

Never mind all that followed. The visitors thought it a comedy. Mr. White, knowing of what had gone before, knew it to be tragic. When it was over, the committee held a brief consultation.

"That's a quaint specimen you have there, Brother White," Mr. Lathrop laughed; "where did you pick him up?"

Mr. White blushed scarlet. He had not thought of the ridiculous figure he would cut, fostering Jed's aspirations before his cultured brethren.

"He—his convictions appear to be sincere," he apologized.

"Of course he is quite—what would you say—impossible," Mr. Lathrop said, glancing at the third member, who nodded assent. "You would better break it to him, knowing him as you do. Tell him that we recommend another year's careful reading."

"How can I go home to mammy?" was Jed's dim thought. He sought the depths of the woods, whose cool healing he knew so well. He could find no peace until he had seen his mother.

She held the door open as he came up the pathway. A glance at his haggard face told her the dreaded worst.

"Jeddy—you—" she began. Then she kept her peace, holding his head upon her breast.

"They said another year," he said presently. "I do n't care for myself; not a bit, but it's a long time for you, ain't it, mammy, a year?" Then his firm jaws grew fixed, and the blow of his fist upon the table made the house tremble, "But I'll do it. By God! I'll do it!"

Then in another year he failed again. He was so hopelessly dull and slow of understanding.

His mother had grown thinner and paler through the slow passage of time. She had never been strong since Phil's death. Soon after that she died, speaking much of Phil as the end drew near.

When a week was gone, giving him time to think, Jed sat one night beside the new grave, with Bull's thick head under his caressing hand.

"It's just us now, Bull," he said. The current of his thoughts was in the old channel. After a while

he said: "Why don't you try preachin', Bull? You could do it quicker'n me, an' we'd have a preacher in the family, anyhow!" He sat for a long time, picking bits of earth from the heaped grave and shooting them into the air with his thumb. He was thinking as deeply as he knew.

"I'm goin' to give her another try, Bull," he announced. "I ain't got no monument to put up for her, an' I reckon if she could see me preachin', after all, that'd be pretty near like a monument; wouldn't it; eh?" So he went back and began again.

Late in the fall there was a scourge of diphtheria among the children; such a trial as the village had never known. Jed laid aside his books. He could nurse a sick child, at least. But that is so different from preaching.

The work grew more than the volunteer nurses of the village could do, and one day Jed rode to Whitesville to see Mr. Lathrop.

"Ah! my ambitious young friend from down the river," Mr. Lathrop greeted him at his door; "what can I do for you? Come in."

"We want help down below," Jed said; "there's diphtheria terrible bad. I been nursin' —"

"Wait! wait!" the minister cried; "you ought not to come into the house in this careless way. Stand outside on the porch. You are endangering other lives." So Jed stood outside.

"I did n't know anybody nearer than you," he said, "an' I reckoned you'd come, knowin' you was a minister. I've got a horse ready to take you back."

"But, my dear boy," Mr. Lathrop said, with pale lips, "I can't go with you. I have children of my own here. My first duty is to them." There was more of such argument. Then Jed rode over to Julesburg, where his other acquaintance had his charge. Him Jed found deeply regretful at having to attend a conference of his church. So Jed went home.

He went about his work with all the energy which his love for the little sufferers could arouse in his great heart. Some he helped back to life: others he held against his breast while death settled upon them. Then one day he said to Mr. White, who stood at his side:

"Here; you give this medicine. My—things is goin' round so, I can't see."

In four days more Bull dug madly with his old paws at another mound under the elms in the graveyard, howling dismally, wondering what ailed Jed.

WILLIAM R. LIGHTON.



## REVIEWS

### A SEALED BOTTLE OF RIPE WINE

ENGLISH LANDS, LETTERS AND KINGS. THE LATER  
GEORGES TO VICTORIA.—By Donald G. Mitchell.  
12mo. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.

MR. MITCHELL'S last volume, the fourth of its series of English Lands and Letters, is a first-hand book, racy of the soil and the library—in manner neither conventionally literary nor obsequiously journalistic. One feels that to its author the tomes of the past are merely the expression of life—personality. He browses among them at will, and in proportion as he has ceased to study systematically, is able, apparently, as Symonds said of himself, to think and feel originally. Yet he does not welter in a dreary dream-jumble. His impressions and opinions are clean-cut and incisive. He realizes that the world wants the outside as well as the inside of things. He revels in color and metaphor—the more homely and intelligible the better. Keats's *Endymion*, he says, is "a gushing, wavy, wandering poem, . . . with some bony under-structure of Greek fable—loose and vague—and serving only as the caulking-pins to hold together the rich, sensuous sway, and the temper and roll of his language." After quoting from one of Macaulay's *Lays*, he remarks:

This does not sound like those verses of Shelley, which we lately encountered. Those went through the empyrean of song like Aurora's chariot of the morning, with cherubs, and garlands, and flashing torches. This, in the comparison, is like some well-appointed dump-cart, with sleek, well-groomed Percheron horses—up to their work, and accomplishing what they are set to do absolutely well.

Compared with Byron, Moore seems to him "only a little important-looking, kindly pug—nicely combed, with ribbons about the neck—in an embroidered blanket, with jingling bells at its corners." Hazlitt—his Bohemian hack-writing—the seething of his prejudices—here receives a distinctly fresh touch. Of De Quincey he says, rather infelicitously, that he "utilized even his vices" in the *Confessions*. He is not so sure as is Mr. Maurice Thompson that De Quincey will "live," though he believes that a century or two more will pass before people of discernment will cease to read and to enjoy Scott. That the latter worked from the outside—in, he reluctantly admits, adding, charitably rather than irrelevantly:

He lived in times when men fell straightforwardly in love, without counting the palpitations of the heart; and when heroes struck honest blows without reckoning in advance upon the probable contractile power of their biceps muscles.

Mr. Mitchell alludes to "that seamy, shining, wonderful residue of dirty stories, and of brilliant phosphorescence, which we call *Don Juan*," and

elsewhere speaks of Byron as defying "priests and traditions, and order, and law, and decency." If there be harshness, it is only here. One gains from every page the impression that books are as real to him as life itself. Indeed, the boundaries of fiction and fact fade away. Beau Power, Lady Blessington's father, was "an Irish country gentleman of the Lucius O'Trigger sort"; and Dandie Dinmont with his pow-wow of Pepper and Mustard, and "patient, prudent, excellent Jeanie Deans," leave no doubt as to the author's appropriation of them. With him criticism is far from "something not ourselves making for paradox." It was Dr. Goldwin Smith who called Scott's marriage one of "intellectual disparagement,"—which means, Mr. Mitchell supposes, that "Mrs. Scott was not learned and bookish . . . —but honest, true-hearted, and domestic." Uncommon sense predominates. There is nothing to forgive, within the province of *res judicatae*, beyond the mention of "poor Charles Lamb." Has there not been enough cant about "poor Charles Lamb," Mr. Mitchell, that you should join in transmitting it? Charles Lamb was about as "poor" as Don Quixote, who said to his squire, on leaving the court of the duchess: "Freedom, my friend Sancho, is one of the most precious possessions of man, and happy is he to whom Heaven has given a bit of bread, and who need not be indebted to any one."

Call it biography, criticism, talk, or what you will, the charm of such a book lies in the author's being handicapped by no theory. It is not butterflies, nor birds' eggs, nor four-leaf clovers he sets his heart on in advance, though we know that he will be likely to have a good collection of all of these before he returns. He does not specialize his walk, nor dictate terms to Providence as to the game he shall bag. He goes out with his quick Connecticut eyes to see what there is. If he were on a still hunt for ethics here, and psychology or humor there, or in the frame of mind to blackball an author for using a cleft infinitive, he would be liable to disappointment, and thus defeat his main object, which is enjoyment. To this end he nestles up close to what authors and localities he chooses, intending to get all the solid, human comfort out of each he can. Perhaps this is why he does not allot the conventional amount of space to every famous writer or historical personage. One may write volumes about an author—even be regarded as an authority upon him—and have missed *him*, the real man, altogether; whereas many a paragraph in a newspaper or magazine, unsigned or untrumpeted, rings true—reveals a kindred and understanding spirit. Such are Mr. Mitchell's observations—delivered off-hand, but often embodying the genial reflections of years.

How far the repose and good cheer of Mr. Mitchell's later books have proceeded from his life-long residence in New England it would be difficult to say. One cannot imagine him writing from any

other place than "Edgewood." Was it Mr. Howells who last dilated on the obliteration of a sense of neighborhood in big cities? Somehow, East and West Rock, the arbutus—and chestnuts and *nutmegs*, we were about to say—of New Haven County get into Mr. Mitchell's inkstand. He has the sunshine and blue sky, the "breeze upon his face," and "turf beneath his feet," of Longfellow's recipe. Mr. Harte in Glasgow, Mark Twain in Hartford, and Mr. Kipling in Vermont—what incongruities! One might as easily picture Henry Fielding in Boston, or Walter Pater in Chicago. But Mr. Mitchell belongs within a ten-mile radius of Yale as truly as Gray belonged in Cambridge or Charles Lamb in London. He is the lucky cosmopolitan who has settled down in the place endeared to him by associations. Europe got into him early enough to fructify in his heart and mind. He kept close to nature, read widely and meditatively, lived genuinely, with no secret shred of time-serving or hypocrisy, and retaining his early sentiment and faith, grew year by year in grasp of reality, in breadth of view, and in sense of humor. With such a constitution and with such by-laws, he can now cope with the tornado of modern life, as the Old Buccaneer said, "happy as a sealed bottle of ripe wine."

#### "NONE NAME THEE BUT TO PRAISE."

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.—By the Very Reverend Frederick W. Farrar, D.D. 8vo. T. Y. Crowell & Co. \$1.75.

**A** GREAT many distinguished gentlemen number the Dean of Canterbury among their most cherished friends, and are permitted to disclose the esteem in which they hold him in these rather artless pages. There are also a few distinguished gentlemen who have, with little reason, denied themselves the pleasure of the Dean's acquaintance, though this does not by any means deter him from including their names in the roll of honor which goes to form his table of contents. Thus in the chapter named *A Group of Eminent Americans* the name of Ralph Waldo Emerson leads all the rest. Turning to the page designated one reads: "Ralph Waldo Emerson I never saw. He is known to me solely by his brilliant essays, his poetry, the interesting records of his intercourse with Carlyle, and the careful appreciation of his genius by Mr. Matthew Arnold." Yet, great as must have been the loss of Emerson, he can rest quite as contentedly as that other American of distinction "whom I visited," Dr. Farrar's account runs, "and who died soon after."

Despite the success which crowned Dean Farrar's visit to this country,—and, as he reminds us, there would have been no Browning Society in Boston



but for him,—his pages show him to be vastly better pleased at home. Some of his experiences will make the reason for this quite apparent. "It will always be a pleasant recollection that as I left Lord Beaconsfield he rose, took me by the arm, walked with me across the great reception-room and . . . said very genially, 'Dr. Farrar, I have always felt a sincere regard for you.' They were the last words I heard him speak." Nor is this an isolated instance. When Dean Stanley heard of Dr. Farrar's appointment to a canonry at Westminster he wrote straightway: "My dear Farrar,—I shall indeed be delighted to welcome so great an accession to our Abbey staff." In this case the Dean's delighted friend lived to say many other pleasant things; which are duly repeated. Charles Darwin, here described as "the most epoch-making man of science in our age," Dean Farrar knew chiefly by letter. "I had sent him my *Origin of Languages*," he observes, "in which he had been greatly interested." One soon comes to feel that there are few men of real note, time not forbidding, who have not been eager to lay their tribute of praise at his feet. As a necessary result there is considerable monotony in the narrative, some of it being quite as flat as a Chinese landscape, for all the I's are very tall.

Yet Dean Farrar undoubtedly knows his audience and is right when he publishes his own portrait twice, and observes "Every man or woman takes an interest in even seeing men of unquestioned greatness"; and he rightly asks us to recall in this connection "how deep was the interest with which Robert Browning looked on a man who had talked with Shelley." These considerations should make him, in spite of all his little fondnesses for praise, not such bad reading, especially if we adopt his suggestion "in order to get rid," as he phrases it, "*in limine*, of the notion there is anything necessarily vulgar or trivial in such a refined and modified Boswellism as may seem to be involved in slight reminiscences."

The book abounds in illustrative anecdotes of the autobiographer and all that is his, going back as far as "my celebrated ancestor, the Marian martyr—Farrar, Bishop of St. David's, who was burnt alive at Caermarthen in 1555." Many of these have been extensively copied since their first publication and are doubtless familiar to most readers. In collected form, however, they cannot fail to leave a better impression of their compiler's many virtues, though the humor of the book is not as well-managed as the rest of it. One reads of Dr. Short, Bishop of Sodor and Man, who so delighted in the oral questioning of children in the national schools that on one occasion he asked them "What they supposed his besetting sin to be?" With one acclaim they shouted "Drunkenness!" but he explained that they were wrong: it was "Pride." A companion piece to this is Dean Farrar's *naïve* admis-

sion, "I was very diffident about myself—as a boy at King's College." But best of all is this—with which to close:

"I remember once being told by a friend that he happened to visit Carlyle just after a brilliant man of genius had left him, whom my friend had met on his way to Carlyle's door.

"'Ah,' said the visitor, 'I have just been visiting poor Carlyle. He is a mere wreck! a mere wreck!'

"'So you have just had Mr. — with you,' said my friend to Carlyle.

"'Yes,' was the answer of the 'mere wreck,' 'and he thinks God Almighty never made such another!'

Mr. — did not know Dean Farrar.

### INVERTED DEMAGOGISM

THIS COUNTRY OF OURS.—By Benjamin Harrison.  
12mo. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.

IN permitting Mr. Harrison to write and a grateful country to read these undisturbing essays on "the machinery of our National government in motion," *The Ladies' Home Journal* has gone far toward solving a question as vexed if not as old as the Bermoothes. Genius is needed to find for an ex-president a compatible employment in which ease waits on dignity, and, let us hope, affluence on both. Mere gratitude, therefore, compels a search for the aroma which should linger about essays so conceived and published—and it is not far to seek. The *Introduction* itself contains this: "If a boy were asked to give his reasons for loving his mother, he would be likely to say, with the sweetest disregard of logic and catalogues, 'Well, I just love her.' And," the eminent essayist proceeds to argue, equally regardless of logic and catalogues (why catalogues?), "we must not be too hard on the young citizen who 'just loves' his country, however instructed he may be." Having thus sought to restrain the ferocity of his countrymen toward their young, even while paying tribute to the literary manner of the periodical in which his essays were born, Mr. Harrison goes on to instruct us all in the reasons for loving our native land.

Regarding the question of a tariff, prohibitive of imports and revenue or otherwise, he maintains a masterly silence. But pensions, just such pensions as this country is giving and no other, excite his hearty admiration. The present power of the Speaker of the House of Representatives is another of our institutions which brings forth the meed of praise, though not to the extent to which everything connected with the federal judiciary as it is at present constituted excites delight. The government and its judges, it seems, like the king in Blackstone's *Commentaries*, can do no wrong. The people, however, may be blameworthy. "A greater

reverence for law is a sore need in this land of ours," is an important statement coming from a man who has not only made law his life study and the enforcement of law his official duty, but has himself added to our stock of legislation. But why does he, except through inadvertence, confound cause and effect to make so grave a reflection upon our law-makers?

There are men in this country, devotees of the "American" idea, and fully convinced of greatness of the nation's future, who do not believe that patriotism necessarily leads us into the blind acceptance of this government in all its existing details as the one best calculated to ensure for its people "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Even though these men are students of comparative legislation, who suffer pain when our legislative bodies perpetuate crass errors where they might be following examples not less obvious than good, they find neither place nor sympathy in Mr. Harrison's optimistic scheme. It is idle to search for adverse criticism, intelligent or otherwise, of the government of these United States in *This Country of Ours*. Far from suggesting remedies for existing abuses, there is no suggestion that abuses exist. Great are our rulers, and Benjamin Harrison is—or was—their prophet; this is the tenor, placid and serene, of every chapter in the book with one exception. Here the ghosts of personal disquietude will not down.

When Mr. Harrison comes to speak of *The President* his eloquence rises quite to the point of peevishness. "For the first three weeks of an administration the President shakes hands with from forty to fifty thousand persons. The physical drain of this is very great." "It is a rare piece of good fortune during the early months of an administration if the President gets one wholly uninterrupted hour at his desk each day." "There is not a square foot of ground, not a bush nor a shade-tree, that the President or his family can use in privacy." Ill-mannered, inconsiderate folk, these Americans, and Mr. Harrison quotes Dickens to prove it! But in respect of their government, he neither praises times gone by nor prophesies good times to come, but stands immutably upon matters as they are to be found now, to-day. There will be some students of affairs who will hold that this attitude of complacency does not accord well with Mr. Harrison's wide experience; that to be a mere sayer of smooth things at this hour is not to be patriotic, is not to be statesmanlike, is not even to be glowing with the health of manly partisanship, but is another attempt to substitute sickly infatuation over "Old Glory" for honest efforts to keep the flag unspotted from its subtlest and most determined enemies. To such critics *This Country of Ours* will be no less mischievous and far more wheedling than demagogism open and avouched—it is itself, in a phrase, inverted demagogism. And in any light the only lessons this highly favored American seems to have for his

fellow-citizens are these: You might, by a little thoughtfulness, have made my official life much happier; and, To be perfectly satisfied with everything as it is, it is only necessary to be as much like me as possible. Yet few are called to write for *The Ladies' Home Journal*.

## TWO WOMEN OF THE LAST CENTURY

MARTHA WASHINGTON.—By Anne Hollingsworth Wharton. 16mo.

CATHERINE SCHUYLER.—By Mary Gay Humphreys. 16mo. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.25 each.

**I**N the new volumes of Scribner's prettily bound series, *Women of Colonial and Revolutionary Times*, Anne Hollingsworth Wharton and Mary Gay Humphreys, respectively and elaborately, have set before us the lives of Martha Washington and Catherine Schuyler. There seems every reason why Miss Wharton's book should have been written, but poor Mrs. Schuyler should have been left unmolested among the happy shadows, or else a less conscientious biographer than Miss Humphreys should have been chosen to picture the homely life of the good, little Dutch housewife.

Miss Humphreys asserts truthfully—her painstaking honesty is everywhere apparent—that the details of Mrs. Schuyler's life have been discovered with difficulty. Miss Humphreys has labored with extreme energy;—we know that Mrs. Schuyler, as Kitty Van Rensselaer, sat in pew 35 of the tiny, quaint church in Albany—Miss Humphreys does not tell us it is quaint, but the imagination eagerly surmises it—we are further told that Mrs. Schuyler paid four pence for her beef and six pence for her fowls. We can picture pretty Catherine S. trudging home from market, the necks of those six-penny fowls dangling disconsolately over the edge of her basket. Such examples show the minute industry with which Miss Humphreys has collected her facts. Our quarrel is only with the manner in which she has used them, and the comparative unimportance of the figure which serves her as an excuse for such elaboration about old Albany. Only after chapters of minute description of everybody in Albany and New York, on page 154, with a suddenness that is shocking, Catherine Schuyler bursts upon our view. It must be unintentional—Miss Humphreys turned her back for a moment. We will give her the benefit of the doubt; momentarily she forgot herself, and poor, handsome, little Catherine insisted on jumping out of the box and being heard.

From this point the book shows some improvement. Mrs. Schuyler brings up a family, wayward and entertaining—just retribution for such a mother. There is handsome Margaret, who dashed through the flames and the whistling tomahawks to save her sister's baby-girl; and haughty Cornelia, who slid

down a rope to meet the penniless young New York lawyer beneath her window, and drove off in the true coach-and-four style, with dusty postillions and the irate father spurring behind.

But all this is not Catherine Schuyler. She acted like a heroine on the one-hundred and fifty-fourth page, but Miss Humphreys clapped her back in the box, where she lived a retired, if happy, life for the remainder of her days, dying quietly and respectably all in due time. Perhaps it is not quite all the fault of Miss Humphreys. It would be hard for the cleverest biographer to idealize good, sensible, uninteresting Catherine Schuyler. It is true she lived in a stirring period, but her character did not influence the times, and Miss Humphreys has not had the ingenuity, perhaps the daring, for she hedges herself behind mountains of facts, to create instead of to portray.

It is a pleasure to turn from Catherine Schuyler to Miss Wharton's real biography—Martha Washington. Miss Wharton may be more fortunate in her choice of subject, but we imagine that it is the adept hand of the biographer, her wise selection of scenes, her tasteful use of facts, that goes far toward giving the vivid and graceful picture of little Martha Dandridge, afterwards Custis, afterward Washington. Miss Wharton has chosen many charming bits of contemporary description and criticism to aid her in drawing Mrs. Washington. Yet, even where facts have failed, she touches with a convincing hand the tiny, embarrassed figure of Mistress Martha on the night of her first ball at the Court in Williamsburg. Miss Wharton, first and foremost, has the happy art of picturing people and things with extreme vividness. Where Miss Humphreys was seriously uninteresting, Miss Wharton is humorously amusing. She chooses just those traits of character which entertain, as well as teach. She avoids tedious details, and, above all, never fails to keep her principal figure well in the foreground.

Martha Washington fortunately left occasional letters which go far toward bringing her personality before the reader's eyes. Would that Catherine Schuyler had forsaken her knitting long enough to do the same! In her preface, Miss Wharton apologizes for the fact that the character of Washington himself, necessarily and often, must overshadow the kindly qualities of his wife. It might seem impossible to obviate this, but Miss Wharton has massed her characters so skillfully that it is always the wife who holds the centre of the book's stage. The other figures, great and small, serve only as a shifting background, a charming scene.

## A NEW CONCORDANCE

A CONCORDANCE OF THE GREEK TESTAMENT ACCORDING TO THE TEXTS OF WESTCOTT AND HORT, TISDIENDORF AND THE ENGLISH REVISION.—*Edited by W. F. Moulton, M. A., and Rev. N. S. Geden, M. A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons. 4to. \$7.00.*

FOR sheer laboriousness and tediousness few tasks can exceed that of the construction of a complete concordance of any book or author, especially if the work be in a foreign language. But few works are more necessary than a concordance for exact study of any literature, or more useless for any study which is not minute and exact. The publication of the book before us is, therefore, an evidence alike of the thoroughness with which biblical study is pursued to-day, and of the zeal of those who are seeking to promote such study. Indeed, the very idea of a concordance is one which apparently sprang out of the study of the Bible. Probably the first concordance of any considerable scope ever compiled was one of the Latin Bible, which five hundred Dominican monks prepared under the direction of Hugo de S. Caro in the year 1245, and which, after several enlargements and revisions, was published in 1470. The first concordance of the English Bible was published about 1540. To-day we have not only concordances of the Bible in we know not how many languages, but concordances of the ancient classical writers, Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, Cicero, Cæsar, etc., and of the moderns as well, Milton, Shakespeare, and Tennyson. Indeed, it is recognized now that lexicography and interpretation can build with safety only upon the exhaustive induction for which a concordance furnishes the data.

The first concordance of the Greek Testament of which we have definite knowledge—certainly the first that was *published*, is that of Sixtus Birken, prepared at the expense of eight years of labor, and published in 1546. The famous printer, Henry Stephens, published another in 1594. Erasmus Schmid issued one in 1638. In 1842 appeared the first edition of the book which, until the present year, has been recognized as the standard work, that of Karl Hermann Bruder. But New Testament scholars have long felt the need of a better book. The plan of Bruder was admirable, and its execution almost all that could have been expected in 1842. Then the *textus receptus* of the New Testament was in part the standard text, and it was only natural that Bruder's concordance should have been based upon it. But the labor of Tisdiendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and others, together with the publication of the revised version of 1881, itself based on a revised text, have greatly changed the situation and created an urgent demand for a concordance which should show the occurrences of





the Greek words in the texts now known to be far more correct than the old *textus receptus*. Bruder's successive editions attempted to meet this demand, but have, in fact, done so very imperfectly and unsatisfactorily. There was ample room, therefore, for a new Concordance of the Greek Testament, and Professors Moulton and Geden undertook a necessary work. They have adopted the Greek text of Westcott and Hort, as the standard, comparing with it, however, the text of Tischendorf's eighth edition and the English Revision, and exhibiting all the readings of these texts, including those the margin, which affect the form or construction of the index word. All words are indexed except *καί* and *δέ*, and the passages themselves are, as a rule, not merely cited by chapter and verse figures, but printed with sufficient fullness to show the sense. The exceptions to this latter rule are: (1) The most commonly recurring particles; (2) the article (in part); and (3) prepositions governing but one case. It could have been wished that these exceptions had been fewer. So far as can be judged without such an examination as would involve almost the same labor as the original preparation of the book, the work has been accurately done. The little expedients for increasing the usefulness of the book, such as the printing in Hebrew of passages which, as they appear in the New Testament, are quotations from the Old Testament, the classification of meanings and constructions by means of index figures, are excellent. All who are interested in the exact and thorough exegetical study of the New Testament, owe the compilers of this book hearty thanks for giving them this long-desired and exceedingly useful tool for their work. By the way, in view of Dr. Moulton's generous statement in the preface that the bulk of the work was done by Mr. Geden, ought it not to be known as Geden's Concordance?

### ECHOES FROM THE BRONTEON

THE BRONTËS: FACT AND FICTION.—By Angus M. MacKay, B. A. 12mo. Dodd, Mead & Co.

VERY fit, without a doubt, but as certainly very few will always be the initiates of the Emily Brontë cult. Many will still read *Wuthering Heights* with interest, even with admiration, but very small will always be the number of those who are rapt away by the fascination of the author into ecstatic contemplation of the inscrutable mystery of the lonely soul which could flash out into so wonderful an expression of absolute passion and poignant sincerity. Still, it is a worthy cult, as cults go, and does not bother the profane very much, so that there must have been many outsiders who felt a thrill of sympathetic indignation a year or so ago at

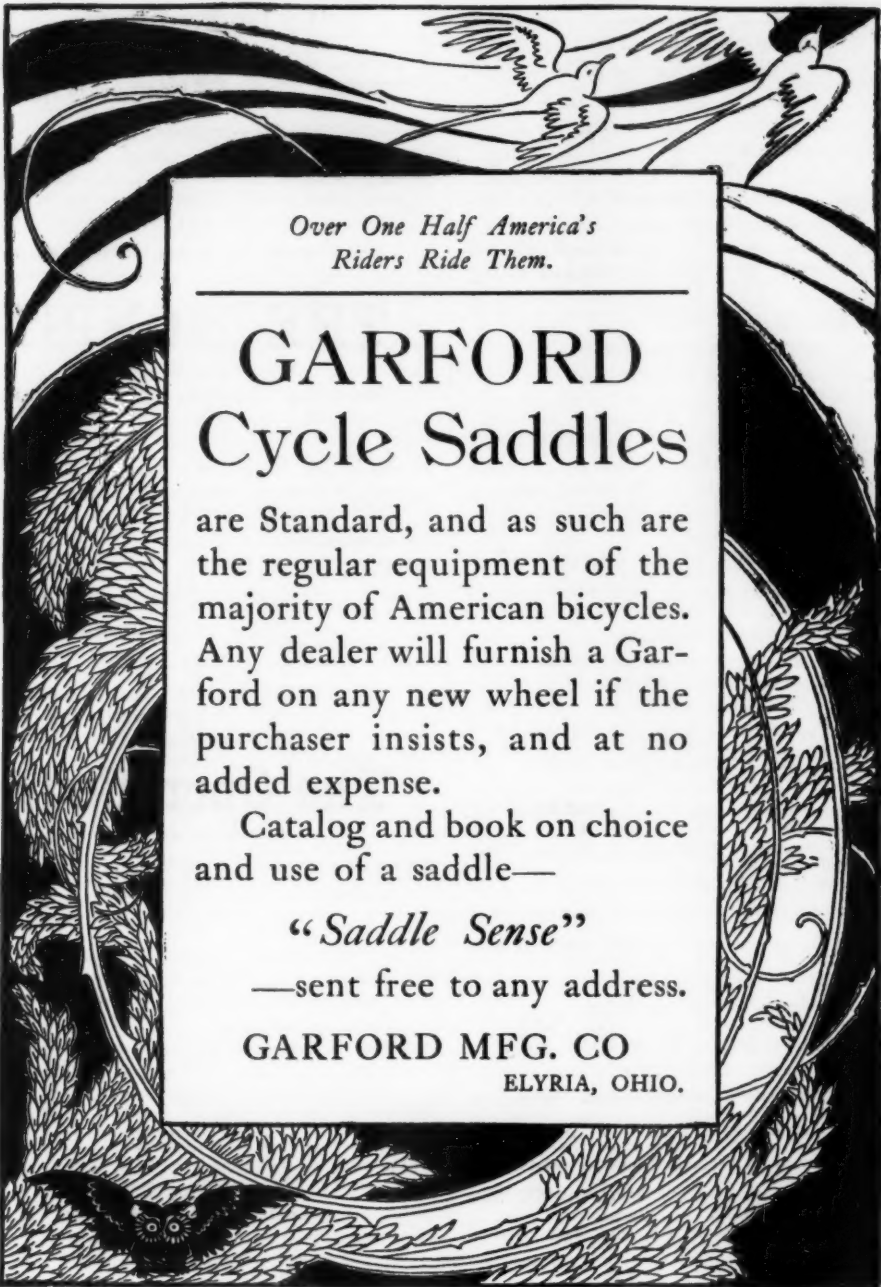
the well-meant but perverse attempt of Dr. William Wright to explain away the sphinx-like genius by the simple means of family tradition. The originals of *Wuthering Heights*, he held, were, not the Yorkshire "moors, and the sunshine, the clouds, the winds, the storms upon them," but merely persons in early Brontë family history. Emily Brontë was merely relating tales of her grandfather. It is pleasant to record that Dr. Wright has now not a leg left to stand on. Mr. Angus M. MacKay has knocked him into a cocked-up hat. Emily Brontë is once more unexplainable.

Cults are not the best things in literature. They are degrading to those who profess them and exasperating to those who do not. But this is an age of professionalism in art as well as in athletics, and if one must be devoted to something, a literary cult has advantages as well as disadvantages. Cults have multiplied of late. The general Brontë cult is more recent than the Emily Brontë cult and much less select. It is perhaps only a dozen years ago that we first began to hear of "Brontë students" and "Brontë literature," "Brontë biography," and "Brontë bibliography." But especially in the past twelve months has there been a great revival in Brontëism, and to-day Mr. MacKay's book will find many more competent readers than it would have found a year ago. But its great excellence is that it may be recommended to Brontë outsiders.

The discussion of Dr. Wright's *Brontës in Ireland* is certainly worth reading. It really might almost be said that it does not matter what the facts may be. It is most amusing to see Dr. Wright jostled about among the remnants of his extraordinary Brontë myths and Mr. MacKay pelting him with great masses of Brontë chronology. But, of course, the facts do really matter, and cults and all aside, Mr. MacKay's argument is that of the sound and sane literary student against the literary enthusiast of irresponsible imagination and chance conjecture. Books like this should do a real service, should help to make it clear that although genius may spurn the dull clods of fact in its creations, yet genius, and its creations, too, are themselves facts and capable of being known to some extent, and, if known at all, known rightly.

Mr. MacKay's book is not entirely critical. In his second part he demolishes the "facts" that Dr. Wright thought stranger than fiction. In his first part he has facts of his own. These will be of greater interest to the close Brontë student than to the general reader. And yet perhaps we do wrong to mention lightly in any way an honest effort to understand adequately that brave-hearted woman who has made an epoch in so many lives. Mr. MacKay has sought the secret of an epoch in her own, of that epoch in which experience matured the power which she afterward exerted over so very many. We hope Dr. Wright will get after him. If he does we shall predict the issue with confidence.





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SUPPLEMENT TO  
**The Chap-Book**

Vol. VII, No. 12

Semi - Monthly

November 1, 1897

## THE CHAP-BOOK

A MISCELLANY AND REVIEW OF BELLES-LETTRES. \$2.00 PER YEAR

The publishers desire to call attention to the following incomplete list of the contributors to late issues: The late Robert Louis Stevenson, Henry James, A. T. Quiller-Couch, Thomas Hardy, F. Frankfort Moore, Arthur Morrison, Kate Douglas Wiggin, John Davidson, Hamilton Wright Mabie, Louise Chandler Moulton, Louise Imogen Guiney, Maurice Thompson, Joseph Pennell, Ruth McEnery Stuart, William Canton, Alice Morse Earle, Max Beerbohm.

### SOME RECENT PRESS NOTICES

Considering the dimensions of the latest issue of the CHAP-BOOK, I assume this literary bi-monthly is a success. Without question, it is the only American publication which approaches in any way the standard of the English literary weeklies. The reviews are bright, smart and intelligent, though somewhat flippant at times, and the editorial notes have other virtues beside their frankness.—*San Francisco Wave*.

The CHAP-BOOK preserves its vigor and vivacity, and does not lose the peculiar tone which has characterized it from the first. Its merits are marked, and it seems to have outgrown its most conspicuous faults.—*The Congregationalist*.

I wish to commend the literary notes in the CHAP-BOOK to my readers. They seem to me to be exactly what literary notes ought to be: well-written, individual and aggressive. If one were to ask me if I always agreed with them, I should have to answer—sometimes. But whether one agrees or not is a subordinate matter; the main point is that they jog the imagination, cut unsparingly into conventionalities, and give one a new outlook on literature. In this connection I wish to note that the enlarged CHAP-BOOK is an admirable bi-monthly literary journal. I have no fault to find with it, save only, perhaps, that the list of signed contributors includes too many familiar names. I am on the outlook for "new talent," and I count on the CHAP-BOOK (in the future) to reveal it to me.—*Edward Bright in Illustrated American*.

The CHAP-BOOK is always fearless and unprejudiced in its criticism; its standard is its own, and for that reason its opinion is worth knowing.—*Los Angeles Times*.

It is devoted mainly to criticism—not mere book notices—something the reading-public has long needed and really wanted.—*Pittsburg Commercial-Gazette*.

The CHAP-BOOK is indispensable. In its new form as a literary review it fills an important place in our magazine literature.—*Rochester Post-Express*.

The magazine, since its enlargement, is as bright and brilliant as ever. For a miscellaneous review of belles lettres treated in an original way, with a spicy vein, one must read this magazine. It is the dessert which comes after the hearty literary meal.—*Philadelphia Item*.

The new CHAP-BOOK is an imposing and inspiring production to take in the hands, and it is opened with an anticipatory zest that is rewarded simply by a reading of the contents.—*Providence News*.

The notes are vivacious and vigorous. The literary quality is what one has a right to expect from a literary journal, and we heartily welcome the new CHAP-BOOK to our table.—*The Watchman*.

One is pleased with the verve and range of the CHAP-BOOK's "Notes." They are not of the snappy, afterthought kind served by most periodicals, but of the well-rounded, wholesome order, so placed that they give zest to the literary feast in their wake.—*Milwaukee Sentinel*.

That the CHAP-BOOK has an audience is due entirely to the fact that there is an audience worthy of it, for the Gaderean swine who compose the clientele of the ordinary magazine would be poor beasts before whom to cast the CHAP-BOOK pearls.

The CHAP-BOOK is doing good work in proving that it is not necessarily impossible for a purely literary magazine to exist in this country.—*Buffalo Enquirer*.

The CHAP-BOOK is too well known to need any particular description here. Sufficient to say that it has a decided literary policy, which consists in speaking the plain, unvarnished truth about books and authors, holding to its convictions unswervingly. It is indeed refreshing to take up so rational a magazine. Its criticisms and reviews are written for the purpose of giving the public information, and apparently without regard for the sale of the works therein mentioned.—*Kalamazoo Telegraph*.

The CHAP-BOOK has been cured of its radicalism by the same process that has been employed with so much success and skill in English politics, and is now a staid and respectable member of the literary House of Lords, and presents, I am bound to say, a most dignified appearance wrapped in its ermine of publishers' advertising.—*James L. Ford in New York Journal*.

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## The CHAP-BOOK

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

Vol. VII, No. 12

November 1, 1897

## THE LAST STEVENSON

ST. IVES.—By Robert Louis Stevenson. 12mo.  
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RARELY is an author his own best critic; occasionally, however, he hits off a verdict so coincident with the opinion of more detached readers that it is worth while letting it stand. The best known case in point, perhaps, is that of Dr. Johnson, who, when one Pott declared *Irene* the finest tragedy of modern times, contented himself with grumbling, "If Pott says so, Pott lies." So Stevenson, in one of his letters to Mr. Sidney Colvin (dated June, 1894), characterises *St. Ives* so neatly that it is due him, in simple fairness, to quote it at length.

"I must not let you be disappointed in *St. I.*," he writes. "It is a mere tissue of adventures; the central figure not very well or very sharply drawn; no philosophy, no destiny, to it; some of the happenings very good in themselves, I believe, but none of them *bildende*, none of them constructive, except in so far perhaps as they make up a kind of sham picture of the time, all in italics and all out of drawing. Here and there, I think, it is well written; and here and there it's not. Some of the episodic characters are amusing, I do believe; others not, I suppose. However, they are the best of the kind, such as it is. If it has a merit to it, I should say it was a sort of deliberation and swing to the style, which seems to me to suit the mail-coaches and post-chaises with which it sounds all through. 'T is my most prosaic book."

Nothing could be more judicious, more phrased to a nicety. To pick flaws in the book would be largely to paraphrase Stevenson's own statements, and as that is a thankless task, much trouble is saved. But there are one or two omissions which we shall endeavor to supply, after which it will be a pleasant duty to enlarge on some merits the author modestly overlooked.

The chief trouble, apart from its being "a mere tissue of adventure," "a sham" (one wonders if Mr. Weyman could be so courageous), is that the book is, to a deplorable extent, a *récit* of several others by the same eminent hand. La Belle Flora is the Stevensonian washed-out lady who, however thinly sprightly, only twice (in *Catriona* and *The Beach of Falesa*) became distinct; the Vicomte Anne de Kéronal de Saint Yves is at times David Balfour, Macaire, Beau Austin, the Young Man with the Cream Tarts; the plot is a perplexing composite in which "The Flight Through the Heather" is the

most recognisable feature; the scenery, delightful as ever, has all been used before, flies, cut-drop, and curtain. And, finally, the figure which the author cuts is that of a weedy, ghost-like Dumas, set up on thin, well-polished stilts.

All this, however, is taking the book too seriously: a mistake which here, at least, Stevenson obviously makes, and a mistake, moreover, which, when anything concerns this most exquisite and irresponsible of writers, nine people out of ten will continue to make till the end of all things. If Stevenson had only written as a motto to *St. Ives* the stage direction which he prefixed to *Macaire*—that it should be played in a vein of light patter—all would be well. Once consider the book on the plane of the lightest of high comedies, in the Meredithian sense, and it becomes delightful; the plot may go hang, and the characters join it. They are not real people, and should not be considered as such: they are old stage friends, delightfully artificial,—supplied with new lives of a rare flavour and ordered about with an engaging deftness. Take, for example the episode in which the Comte de Kéronal, the Vicomte Alaire, the Vicomte Anne, and the lawyer assure one another of their most distinguished consideration: there is nothing more successfully done, in this particular vein, in all Stevenson, except perhaps in *Prince Otto*. The parley between the attenuated *émigré* and his new heir is conducted with an exquisite amenity, an exaggerated courtesy, that would have delighted even Prince Florizel and the Spirited Old Lady,—and there could be no more competent critics. And the adventures of the claret-coloured chaise are sufficiently diverting to have enlisted the sympathy of the Maestro Jimson, who could of all men best afford to be captious. In short, *St. Ives* is in places so completely satisfactory an example of what is best in irresponsible high comedy, that one's only real regret is that the author was unable to secure a finer congruity of tone, but occasionally lapsed, instead, into the pudgily serious. Whether its publication was wise or not is another question, for it clearly shows the loosened grip of the author struggling with his last illness. But many will urge that there was here too much fine gold to be wasted in oblivion.

A discussion of the hundred pages which Mr. Quiller-Couch has written as a conclusion of *St. Ives* will undoubtedly be expected. It is a pity to be disappointing; but there is only to be said that Mr. Quiller-Couch's style has here, as ever, his sublimated journalistic touch; but that in spite of this, he has fulfilled his contract with *McClure's* with high credit. Indeed, his style is so near a complete imitation of Stevenson's that it sets one's teeth on edge to realize how subtly, yet completely, he has missed it,—and to see, with dread, what Stevenson's style might seem like if Mr. Quiller-Couch should ever take it into his head to burlesque the author of three-fourths of *St. Ives*.

## WITH CLUB AND BRUSH

NEAR A WHOLE CITY FULL.—By Edward W. Townsend. 12mo. The G. W. Dillingham Company. \$1.25.

POSSIBLY the success with which Mr. Townsend avoids the literary manner should be held to justify the pains he takes to accomplish such a result. *Chimmie Fadden* is recalled as a dialect—*vox, et præterea nihil*; *Major Max* as of that class of writing to which the *New York Sun* might lend a name if it were of importance enough to have one; *A Daughter of the Tenements* as a melodramatic medley so indiscreet that a plea of "first offence" could not suffice—and now comes a collection of short stories. Through the medium of an illustrated slip which the publisher furnishes with this last, we are informed that "there are certain cities which speak with a compelling voice to certain writers; like Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, they seem to select the man who must hear them, and lay their spell upon him; thus Stendhal is impelled to tell of Florence, Coppée of Paris, Dickens of London. New York seems to have made a similar demand upon Mr. Townsend"—and, modest as this statement is, it still withholds half the truth, for the voice is New York's voice, but the hands are the hands of San Francisco.

It is in the very last of these stories that Mr. Townsend speaks of "my friend, Ambrose Bierce." Now, Mr. Bierce is a writer who sets his thoughts in order by means of two implements—or weapons,—either a large brush surcharged with color (his admirers are wont to cluster about where it splatters smallest, and cry "What fine effects!"), or a heavy club, by means of which he accomplishes feats of main strength—what the French call *tours de force*. The marks of these utensils are everywhere apparent in the tales before us, as if to prove that Mr. Bierce is to Mr. Townsend what he has been for so many bewildered young writers from California—both friend and mentor.

It is not necessary to multiply instances of this: "I told you," says a brute made rich by infamous swindling, to his old father in *The Reward of Merit*, "I was above stealing small change from little crooks. I am a gentleman, I am." "You are, Larry, my boy, and I'm proud of you," the old father replies as the curtain falls. This is the large brush. In the first tale of them all a policeman comes to a millionaire, just as the latter has arranged for the prosperous future of his old friend's son across the square, saying, "Excuse me, but a young man has just killed himself, and your card was the only address found in his room." "My card? My God, man! Where?" "In a fourth-story back room in a house just across the square." This is the heavy club. In *By Whom the Offence Cometh*, the concluding words run: "Two men, turning to enter the building, held the skirts of their coats aside that

they might not touch the poor huddled figure. They were going in to a meeting of the Board of Foreign Missions to urge the sending forth of more men to teach in distant lands the gospel of Jesus Christ." In this the use of both club and brush, one in either hand, is apparent. The rest are all done with one or the other simply, except *The Night Elevator Man's Story*, which is a resuscitation of Chimmie Fadden in his most mawkish mood, and *Polly Slangue's Trousseau*, a further exhibition of Major Max as a gourmand in drink, victuals, and sentimentality. Nearly all are tales of that deeper depth beneath the slums, and, far from being flavored with the pathos of *The Bridge of Sighs*, as the title of the book seeks to imply, bring to mind nothing more delicate than that latest *chef d'œuvre* of the variety halls, *Tell Our Baby That I'm Dead*.

The book is printed on heavy, fine-coated paper which becomes adhesive at the approach of moisture. The illustrations, done not less plentifully than ill, are of the sort which the coarsest wood-pulp paper of the yellow dailies has never been able to injure. Finally, it is to be noted that a portrait of Mr. Townsend in a figured waistcoat forms the frontispiece of the volume.

## A SENTENTIOUS ROMANCE

IN KEDAR'S TENTS.—By Henry Seton Merriman. 12mo. Dodd, Mead & Co.

IN *Kedar's Tents*—the title is a mere blind—reveals the same general characteristics as *The Sowers*; a good plot, an adroitness at putting two and two together, and an unfortunate superficiality. The story tells how Frederick Conyngham, a briefless young barrister, assumed the guilt of a homicide to shield a friend, went to Spain, and connected himself with episodes in the Carlist insurrection. He was made the unwitting bearer of a message menacing the peace of Europe, and the tale is principally devoted to an account of his efforts to recover this letter after having delivered it—efforts inspired less by a desire to avert a continental catastrophe than to prove to Estella Vincente—"his world held no other woman"—that it was not, as she suspected, a love-letter from another girl.

The author's industry and fertility in devising unexpected incidents and dramatic situations are undeniable, but for all that the story impresses one as a rather pretentious and shallow simulacrum of a novel. Except for the pitiful Geoffrey Homer, who is summarily dropped after the first chapter, the characters are not very real, and their actions are not governed half as much by Fate, to which Mr. Merriman constantly and darkly alludes, as by Mr. Merriman himself. The machinery is so often unconcealed. The women are colorless and uninteresting, the men are continually on parade, self-conscious in their valor, their hate, their love. When General Vincente is mor-



tally wounded, he says by way of comfort to the conscience-stricken girl who is indirectly responsible: "All these things are written down for us beforehand. We only add the punctuation, delaying a little or hurrying a little!" Just before dying he makes a grimace and adds deprecatingly: "'Atwinge of pain,' as if apologizing for giving them the sorrow of seeing it." When a man is about to do something dangerous and fine, it is to be noticed that a "queer look" usually comes into his eyes. It is doubtless this taste for rather cheap and worn-out melodramatic effects which impelled the writer to choose for his hero a name containing a y and to assume, both on and off occasion, an impressive, didactic air, as of one deeply versed in the subtle springs of human action. One can fancy him saying between brisk, incisive puffs of a cigarette: "A well-born radical is one whom the world has refused to accept at his own valuation. A wise man is ready to strike a bargain with Fate. The wisest are those who ask much and then take half. It is the coward who asks too little and the fool who imagines that he will receive without demanding." It is submitted that these remarks—which occur in precisely this lump—are not profound, coherent, or suggestive. They offer a fair example of Mr. Merriman's manner.

But his story is better than his manner; and whoever begins it will finish it, and quickly. It never drags.

#### MR. FORD'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

THE STORY OF AN UNTOLD LOVE.—By Paul Leicester Ford. 16mo. Houghton & Mifflin. \$1.25.

**M**R. FORD is versatile. *The Honorable Peter Sterling* is a political novel of excellence; *The Great K. & A. Train Robbery* a fair story of its kind; and now in his latest work Mr. Ford shows his ability to deal with sentiment. That the result is successful in proving the many-sidedness of his genius, no one, we take it, will deny. Its success as a novel, however, is by no means so certain. It is difficult nowadays to deal with sentiment, when the public, somewhat weary perhaps, demands more exciting novelty. There is something self-conscious in the modern, matter-of-fact reader of novels that renders him painfully quick to imagine that he is being imposed upon or laughed at. He prefers not to meet direct appeals; he dislikes to be forced to sympathize with the author. This, no doubt, makes the task of gaining approval doubly hard for the man who will touch hearts, not fancies. If Mr. Ford were conscious of the difficulties in his way, he is to be congratulated on his courage in choice, not only of subject, but of method. It were hard enough to succeed by any means, yet Mr. Ford has

chosen the most difficult. In a diary of letters addressed to the woman he loves, the hero tells his story. Obviously there must be much that he would not write that the reader has to know; much of reminiscence and hazy recollection that might be dreamed over, but never written. Admirably, if not satisfactorily, Mr. Ford has surmounted these obstacles and brought, with some evident effort, past and present curiously into one plane.

While for the most part the novel is intensely subjective in tone, the author has succeeded in interspersing, with the constant appeals to Maizie, much that relieves by its narrative or descriptive nature, the somewhat cheerless monotony of Maitland's resignation. Throughout we feel that he makes too little effort to explain misunderstanding, too much to repair a monetary wrong. It is not wholly unusual with impetuously practical men of to-day to deem Henry Esmond too good a man and his history stupid. However much is to be regretted a civilization that makes this point of view possible, it is, nevertheless, necessary to take account of it as a fact in any estimate of success. Donald Maitland, it seems likely, will be classed with those that are too good. Maizie is charming, then hard-hearted, finally feminine.

There are few novels that are better reading in serial than in book form, yet *The Story of an Untold Love* seems aptly to belong to this few.

The book is excellently and charmingly written, though the obvious ingenuity with which Mr. Ford has contrived to end each letter with "Good-night," jars slightly.

#### A KING OF DIAMONDS

AN AFRICAN MILLIONAIRE.—By Grant Allen. 12mo. Edward Arnold. \$1.50.

**A**LTHOUGH the signature of Sir Charles Vandrift is "the writing of a man who knows his worth, and is not afraid of drawing his cheque for five thousand," Sir Charles himself is neither the late Barney Barnato nor Mr. Cecil Rhodes. One's apprehension that the hero of Mr. Allen's latest story may be drawn from one or the other of these acquisitive gentlemen is effectually dispelled from the first by the profound lack of intelligence Sir Charles exhibits in his meeting with Colonel Cuthbert Clay, the apotheosized "bunco steerer" of the tale. If anything could lend interest to twelve "episodes" in the life of an African millionaire, that concern themselves, from the first to the last, with the attempts of a "confidence man" to obtain large sums of money by a variety of picturesque "skin games," it would be that the millionaire in question was possessed of the valuable intuition that bids one seek shelter in the event of a sudden shower. But Sir Charles Vandrift—the king of diamonds, between whose frown

and smile the London stock exchange oscillates like a pendulum—elaborately fails on every possible occasion to display a glimmer of the intellect he undoubtedly must have had concealed somewhere about him in order to have picked up so many diamonds while in Africa. It is small wonder that he is the dupe of as transparent a series of cheap conjuring tricks and country fair extortions as has been strung together in many a day. Of course he is at the mercy of the first swindler at whose head he throws himself—so completely at his mercy that one takes but feeble interest in standing by to watch the guileless gentleman fleeced.

Mr. Allen, realizing, perhaps, that as a detective story of the old school *An African Millionaire* might be regarded in the nature of a challenge by those of us who have seen the sun rise above the pages of Emile Gaboriau and de Boisgobey—to say nothing of Anna Katherine Green—disarms one quite, by constantly slapping his characters—and the reader—on the back (parenthetically) with the heavy hand of his distinctly British humor.

#### PUBLISHED—BY A HAIR'S BREADTH

BY A HAIR'S BREADTH.—By Headon Hill. 12mo. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.25.

GIVEN a "well-groomed Russian gentleman of the modern 'Frenchified' type . . . starting on the first stage of the most terrible responsibility ever confided to man;" endow him with "an alertness that never slumbered, a swiftness that struck home" (whatever that may be), "and an inexorable disregard for feeling that never spared;" conduct him "some way-down a corridor hung with priceless art gems to a curtained door," and then let him discover a princess with a Slavonic name and a "Parisian manner" who, "being to the manner born," moves in the very highest circle of Petersburg society—and you will have the nucleus of the maddest, saddest, baddest tale of nihilism and passion since—an account of the emotional strain—you resigned your position of *chargé d'affaires* in "the splendid, barbaric, northern capital by the ice-locked Neva." Let the princess possess a face that knows "how to vary its expression according to the feelings she wanted to show"; provide her with jewelled paper knives with which to toy and stab playfully the other characters (oh! that "Parisian manner"); put in her power an ingenuous "lady in waiting to the stately Alexandrovna," who "bites her ripe, red lips" until blood comes; stuff an infernal machine as far as your arm will reach up a bedroom chimney and let a "well-groomed" English girl pull it down again before it has had time to blow "le grand petit Nicholas" out of bed on the other side of the partition, and you will have—well, you will have "By a Hair's Breadth."

It would be just as well, perhaps, not to allow your English girl to speak of her young pretender as her "sucking ambassador"; your American colonel might, for once, break through the insular literary convention that prescribes his exclaiming:—"I reckon you've no call to do that, Miss; Colonel Deleval stands right here." The difference between *gourmand* and *gourmet* could with profit be looked into by one who has a *penchant* for giving a *cbic Faubourg cacbet* to his *entourage*. And under no circumstances should one say of the "stately Alexandrovna's" ladies in waiting when *en tour*, that, "travelling makes them nervous—and they scratch." Well-groomed ladies never scratch.

#### HUGH WYNNE, FREE QUAKER.

HUGH WYNNE, FREE QUAKER.—By S. Weir Mitchell. Two Volumes. 16mo. Illustrated. Century Co. \$2.00.

IF the critics of this land have any one thing in common, it is a wild and unreasoning desire to pitch upon some unfortunate author and fix upon him the responsibility for the Great American Novel. With convenient forgetfulness a new victim is discovered with every moon—and for thirty days he is hounded by the grovelling adoration of the newspapers. Superlatives fly up like sky-rockets on Fourth of July and from unsuspected corners. Masterpieces become more numerous than minor poets, and a novel which is anything short of a triumph for its author is utterly beneath notice. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is undoubtedly the greatest American novel ever written; *The Choir Invisible* surpasses it at every point; and now—to complete our bewilderment—comes *Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker*, which, if "not the long-sought Great American Novel, it at least comes nearer to it than any novel of the decade."

Pray, are all American critics women and is hysteria their only qualification? With the mass of books they deal fairly, but let anything a trifle better come to their hands and they are promptly deranged—the critical faculty is gone. They treat it like some new saying of the Lord and metaphorically make the sign of the cross. And all to the delight of the publisher and the corruption of taste in themselves. *Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker*, is not prepossessing in title, and it is put forth in two small volumes in a box—like the later works of Mr. Marion Crawford and Mrs. Humphrey Ward. The announcements state that it contains "pictures by Howard Pyle" which—at most—is true. Out of the ten or more illustrations which Mr. Pyle made for the story only two are republished in the book, and these by no means the best. It is surely to be regretted—and not easily to be understood—that the beautiful drawing "In Aunt Gainor's Garden"

and an extremely interesting picture entitled "Arnold and his Wife" were not included.

Of the story itself much was written and said during its appearance in the *Century Magazine*. Serial reading is always misleading, and fitness for installment issue is generally a defect. For book publication a story should be re-written and the over-dramatic and suspenseful endings to chapters could be done away with to advantage. *Hugh Wynne* is a difficult book to speak of definitely. It is in no sense a great and undying contribution to English literature. It has, however, parts—indeed whole chapters—of such sustained excellence as to entitle Dr. Mitchell to a foremost place among contemporary American novelists. It is a work carefully and seriously put together and done with infinite pains and patience. It is a dignified and considerable performance, but it is not the Great American Novel.

Hugh Wynne, the son of a Quaker father and a French mother, was born in Philadelphia in the middle of the last century, when the colonists were being steadily pushed on to open resistance of the king's oppression. The creed of non-resistance made Tories of most of the Quakers, and John Wynne was no exception. Hugh, however, under the influence of his Aunt Gainor, was in strong sympathy with the colonists. His companion, Jack Warder, a shy, girlish boy, assimilated Hugh's ideas, and at the outbreak of the war was one of the first to go. Hugh, held back by consideration for his father, delayed for some time, but finally enlisted and had many daring adventures. In the mean time he had fallen in love with Miss Darthea Peniston, a young lady who had sat at his side in school and was now grown into a bewitching and flirtatious beauty. Indeed, she had half of the young gentlemen of Philadelphia on her string, including both Hugh and his chum. A rival—and for a time a favored one—was Captain Arthur Wynne, a cousin of Hugh's and an officer in the king's army.

In the end—of course—everything turns out happily. Miss Peniston's engagement to him is broken off, and after much conspiring on Aunt Gainor's part she marries Hugh. This, in barest outline, is the story. It is not, however,—as may be guessed—in the story that Dr. Mitchell's strength lies: it is in the character-drawing, and in the quick, vivid narration of dramatic incidents. The characterization is, in mere truth, wholly admirable. Aunt Gainor, Mrs. Wynne, John Wynne, Darthea, Jack Warder and his father, and "Cat" Ferguson are done to strictest taste. Nothing could be better than the sketch of Bessy Ferguson—it is not done directly and with description: it is implied and shown in the dialogue. Her remarks are always in character. The picture of Hugh's mother is the simplest, sweetest part of the book. She was a devoted, pathetic little figure, suppressed and half killed by the severities of her husband and his religion, but bright, cheerful, and loving through it

all. Her lighter instincts were always popping up, only to be rudely smothered by some word from John Wynne.

"We strolled across to the Schuylkill," says Hugh Wynne, "and there, sitting down, amused ourselves with making a little crown of twisted twigs and leaves of the red and yellow maples. This we set merrily on my mother's gray beaver, while Mr. Wilson declared it was most becoming. Just then Friend Pemberton and my father came upon us, and, as usual when the latter appeared, our laughter ceased.

"I shall want thee this afternoon, Hugh," he said. "And what foolishness is this on thy head, wife? Art thou going home in this guise?"

"It seems an innocent prettiness," said Pemberton, while my mother, in no wise dismayed, looked up with her big blue eyes.

"Thou wilt always be a child," said my father.

"*Je l'espère*," said my mother, "must I be put in a corner? The *bon Dieu* has just changed the forest fashions. I wonder is He a Quaker, Friend Pemberton?"

And again, later on:

"Come, Gainor," she cried, seeing us, "help me to shell my peas. Thou shalt have some. They are come in a ship from the Bermudas. What a pretty pale green the pods are! I should like an apron of that colour."

"I have the very thing, dear. Shall it be the minuet pattern or plain?"

"Oh, plain. Am I not a Friend? *Une amie! Ciel!* but it is droll in French. Sarah Logan is twice as gay as I, but John does not love such vanities. *Quant à moi, je les adore*. It seems odd to have a colour to a religion. I wonder is drab goodness better than red goodness?"

She died while Hugh was still a boy: it was a mercy, too, for her life would have been a sad one.

John Wynne was a hard man—with no humanity and no sympathies. He was unflinching in the rigour of his belief and austere in his insistence on Hugh's acceptance of it. He was not a man to love or to be loved.

Aunt Gainor is truly a most enjoyable old lady. She is, perhaps, the real triumph of the book. Her likeness to her brother, Hugh's father, is perceptible and yet her way of life is so different as to change her entire point of view. She is a silly match-making old woman, attending invariably to other people's business, but always with the best intentions in the world.

Dr. Mitchell has shown much taste in the part the war plays in his story. He has never wearied the reader with too much of it and he has been very careful to select the interesting figures of the time: Major André and Arnold, Washington and Lafayette.

The use of Jack Warder's diary is somewhat overdone. One is bored by the constant introduc-

tion of that form of narrative, and it does not seem essential.

After all is said and done, Hugh Wynne is a remarkable book. It is far ahead of most books done in this country for some years. With slight editing—with more repression—it might have figured in time to come. As it is, one feels that it just misses being great: it tires you with its length, but its picture of the Philadelphia of the 1770's is excellent, and its story of the life of two boys at that time is all that one could ask. Dr. Mitchell made the mistake of writing a Thackeray novel, with much of the humour left out, forty years after date.

### WHITE MAN'S AFRICA

WHITE MAN'S AFRICA.—By Poulteney Bigelow.  
Harper's. \$2.50.

A WRITER who blithely confesses to a blank ignorance of his subject puts himself rather beyond the reach of respectful criticism; and though we suspect Mr. Bigelow has only half faith in his own disclaimer and trusts that the ordinary reader will have none at all, we at least are not prepared to deny its truth. Its accuracy indeed, is more than once confirmed by an off-hand dogmatism which a writer of Mr. Bigelow's experience ought to have avoided as the obvious refuge of trenchant ignorance. For instance, we are told that "the balance of power in South Africa is to-day in the hands of the President of the Orange Free State." It would be just as sensible to say that the balance of power in North America is in British Columbia. The Orange Free State is a small half-Boer, half-British community of about 80,000 whites, surrounded on three sides by English colonies and on the fourth by the Transvaal. It has an exceptional geographical position, and beyond a few native wars has had very few troubles of its own. It is, in fact, a prosperous and, compared with the Transvaal, a fairly intelligent republic. But to speak of it as holding the balance of power in South Africa is ridiculous. Were the Portuguese and German possessions united into one confederacy with the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, Great Britain would still be the paramount authority south of the Zambesi. Indeed we find no meaning whatever in Mr. Bigelow's remarkable dictum. Almost as startling is his announcement that "had Jameson been shot at Krugersdorp by a drum-head court-martial, held by the Boers on the field of battle while their blood was boiling, the civilized world would have condoned the action." Mr. Bigelow apparently has yet to learn that the civilized world never condones a blunder. A writer of this un-judicial turn of mind cannot be expected to throw much light on the present or the future of South Africa; and this book, for all its three hundred odd pages, gives us less of an insight into the real

problems of that country than many an ordinary magazine article.

That much being said, we can add with pleasure that *White Man's Africa*, as a record of purely personal experiences, is in many ways a very interesting book. Not even a cumbrous, shambling style, and a native inability to think, can rub off the fascination of Mr. Bigelow's theme. And with all his patent defects, Mr. Bigelow has some qualifications for his task. He is evidently a wide traveler, and can sprinkle his narrative with the quickening salt of comparison and illustration. He can set down what he sees with force and accuracy, and is a capital hand at abstracting bits of native history from the usual books of reference. Baedeker himself might envy the form and spirit of Mr. Bigelow's digressions into the Portuguese wars with the natives, the life of Moshesh, and the story of Dingaan and Slaagter's Neck. An official guide-book to South Africa will never be complete without them. More human is Mr. Bigelow's account of President Krueger, quite one of the fullest and most enlightening descriptions of that gentleman we have ever read. And Mr. Bigelow is really readable when he gives us his impressions of Cape Town or Natal, or draws a graphic picture of the effect of Portuguese corruption on Delagoa Bay and Lorenzo Marquez. Nor, in spite of an obvious sympathy with the Boers, can anything be reasonably urged against the impartiality of his summing-up of the relations between England and the Transvaal. It is not by any means complete, but so far as it goes it is at least unbiased. Though if Mr. Bigelow had only taken the trouble to put all he had to say on this subject in one chapter we should have been far better pleased. As it is, the *disjecta membra* of his argument are scattered carelessly over the entire length of the book, in desultory paragraphs, without any cohesion. But this lack of proportion and sound composition is visible everywhere. What can be more anomalous in a book on South Africa than to give a long chapter to such a comparative mediocrity as President Steyn of the Orange Free State, and dismiss Mr. Cecil Rhodes with a couple of lines? Except in so far as he lays stress on the importance of American interests in South Africa, and the inability of our consuls to protect and forward them, Mr. Bigelow cannot be said to have achieved anything particularly useful. Still, South Africa is a puzzling and fascinating subject, and even Mr. Bigelow could hardly write on it without displaying some of its minor points in a fresh and interesting light. For the rest, he has provided the text for some first-rate illustrations.





## MEN MUST WORK AND WOMEN MUST WRITE

THE REVOLT OF A DAUGHTER.—By *Ellen Olney Kirk*. 16mo. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

DIANA VICTRIX.—By *Florence Converse*. 16mo. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

A BROWNING COURTSHIP AND OTHER STORIES.—By *Eliza Orne White*. 16mo. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

WOMEN in New England are as anxious to explain themselves, as are the lady novelists of Old England; but the American apologia is a very different affair from British hysterics. The atmosphere of Boston has made it impossible for the Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s little flock of storytellers to write other than decorously, and the really extraordinarily cool blood of the American people has made our "advanced woman" progress along a very different path from that her English sister trod. Generalizing entirely from the fiction of the day, one would say that in England women felt increasingly the need of being loved and that in America they were gradually relegating man to the position of an interesting but unessential figure along the wayside. Miss White gives one phase of this in her story of a man who for years was unable to propose to a girl because every moment of her time was taken up with study and culture-clubs. One gets the best picture of the whole situation from Miss White, and incidentally much the best entertainment. She does not feel especially the seriousness of her task, but writes because she possesses a well-flavored, if not rich, sense of humor. Her mild satire is of life in Boston's suburbs with all the pathetic ineffectiveness of its culture and the very gentle stir of its occasional emotion of love.

The other two books are quite serious, neither badly written nor badly constructed, having no faults in short except that of sheer dullness. Why they are written it would be difficult to say. They are certainly made inevitable by no driving of the creative imagination, nor is the mere possession of leisure time a sufficient excuse for becoming a novelist. Indeed, Mrs. Kirk cannot have many idle moments, for she has already published ten other volumes, most of them better than her latest. It is extremely difficult to award to her a properly calculated damnation of faint praise. She is delightfully well-bred and never offends the taste; she has drawn some quite plausible characters; she has, not wholly without skill, pictured an existence presumably in Brookline; and she has devised for her plot a situation not unoriginal; yet she is dull—we cannot modify the word. An artistic and clever ne'er-do-well has thought for years that he loved with great faithfulness. Only when he finds himself in love with

his *inamorata's* daughter does he discover that the old affection had crumbled unawares. There seems to be here such an amount of loving and the need of love as would invalidate the theory which grouped these stories. But the passion is not very convincing and numerous minor characters are equally, with the heroines of Miss Converse's book, under the sway of *Diana Victrix*.

In this volume two virgins of New England try a winter in New Orleans, living in a French household. They are much impressed with the local color of the place, which we know from the contemporaneous evidence of other and better writers to be much more vivid than Miss Converse succeeds in making it. The two girls are sought in matrimony by the two sons of the house, one a worthy cotton-broker and the other an artistic musical villain. Both girls decide that love is not best for them, and that work, literature, and friendship suffice. This is the plot, lighted up somewhat luridly in its middle course by the actual combustion of the *ingenue* of the piece. Miss Converse starts out writing an acceptable style, but later, when flushed with confidence, and going ahead with some momentum and velocity, she emits rather cheap exclamatory clauses. "Ah, Jeanne, dear Jeanne!" she cries in her own person as author, "was anybody sorry you died? Anybody?"

It may seem romantic and highflown advice to offer to women thus scudding with full sail along a professional career in literature, but we cannot but hope that Mrs. Kirk and Miss Converse will wait before publishing again until the inner prompting is too strong for denial. They are women of too fine a grain to be sacrificed to the fetish of authorship. Miss White will serve as an agreeable commentary upon the doings of her more serious contemporaries.

## HAMILTON GIBSON'S PAST

MY STUDIO NEIGHBORS.—By *William Hamilton Gibson*. Large 8vo. Illustrated. Harper & Bros. \$2.50.

PROBABLY the last book that will bear Hamilton Gibson's name is *My Studio Neighbors*, a collection of eight nature studies that appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, and that are now presented, with his original illustrations, a hundred or so of them, on heavy paper. This work is a companion for the nature lover. It is a book that exalts little things to the dignity of great ones, because the point of view is serious and affectionate. Why cannot science be taught as Mr. Gibson teaches it? Does it so greatly matter to the student that the femur of such and such an animal is of such and such a length or size as it does to know what the animal is, how he lives, what he does, and what he thinks? that the flower is of such and such an order, class, or family, as

that it is a wonder of color and perfume, and that it serves to perpetuate its species through an activity of insects, so adjusted to that purpose that, more than almost any other phenomena, it exemplifies design in nature? Science, which should be truth, is too often classification. To Mr. Gibson the plants and the flying, creeping things that people them are creatures of function worthy at least of study, and he does for us a service in hinting at the diversity and depth of interest to be found in our yards and on our door-steps. For his studio neighbors, though wonderful beings, are not strange. They are our neighbors, too. His town studio was in Brooklyn; his country studio was the little school-house where he had learned his *a-b, abs.* His advantage lay in seeing what flew in at his windows.

This gifted maker of books and pictures was first of all a naturalist, although from childhood his association with the bright, tuneful, beautiful things of wood and wayside had been as much that of the heart as of the intellect. He was not a gunner nor a man who went about with pins, scalpels, and chloroform. His method, exemplified in this, as in all his books, was to watch such creatures as came within his ken—they all appear in time—and report what they did. A convention of ants was more momentous to him than is a convention of men to many of his kind, because he lent to the proceedings a sympathy and understanding not to be imparted by the schools. As an observer—scientist, if you will—he was unique, for he had in high development the sense of beauty and the power to translate it into both word and line. He was not a rhapsodist, like Thoreau, nor the plodder that Gilbert White is, sometimes, nor the Dryasdust of museums and herbaria. To him nature lived and uttered loving messages. Animals trusted him, and birds alighted on his shoulder, and when he takes us to walk we feel that we, too, are his friends.

So we follow him through these pages as he makes his discoveries and observations. We find larval hornets in his paint brush covers; we watch the yellow warbler as she builds successive stories on her nest, to bury the eggs of an interloping cowbird; we shudder at the perils attending the ant or caterpillar as he crosses the little space below the door-step, for it is filled with the pitfalls of the tiger beetle's grub, and we hold our fingers for the grub to snap at, when we have drawn him from his lair on a grass blade; we pick apart, with reluctant hands, the white mass of "cuckoo spit" or "cow spit," to find there the little green bug, the frog-hopper, that made the cuds; we smile as we discover on a stem of bittersweet a covey of microscopic quail, the plumpest of them a quarter of an inch long, and no quail, be sure, but a tree-hopper; we note the bee or moth bumbling in at the portals of a flower, unconscious of the part he plays in its fertilizing; we spend a pleasant minute in the contem-

plation of a "honey dew picnic"; we wade in a swamp and clamber among rocks to collect some native orchids; and we marvel at the murderous possibilities of a milkweed.

The accompaniment of pictures is helpful. They are often explanatory in their intention, but in several instances they are charged with the feeling that makes them art. The large plates of the orchids, for example, have the coolness, fragrance, and silence of the woods. With the brush, as with the pen, Mr. Gibson's work was clean, firm, and sympathetic. Such books as his have a higher function than that of diffusing knowledge: they awaken, rather than load the mind, stimulate habits of observation, and open sources of profit and enjoyment in unsuspected quarters.

### THE BUSY BEE IN LITERATURE

VARIA.—By Agnes Repplier. 16mo. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.

MISS REPPLIER'S function in literature is that of the busy bee. She hovers over and enters into books, some of them most unprepossessing in appearance, and she returns thence laden with stuff which is not by any means of Hymettus, but which will pass very well for honey. These gleanings are given to the world from time to time in small volumes and for all the world like a honeycomb—in more respects than one, for it is not easy to read more than one of these amiable essays at a sitting. But this present book does something more than provide mere richness. There is one paper which takes a most—we should like to write *manly*, but *womanly* will serve—determined stand against such "Sabbath-school Literature" as is usually given to defenceless children in the name of God. Taking a portion of her material from Mrs. Alice Morse Earle's *Customs and Fashions in Old New England*, Miss Repplier writes a rebuke under the fortunate name of *Little Pharisees in Fiction*, inflicting a deserved and unmerciful scoring upon the sickening religiosity, the mewling sentimentality of the average Sunday-school book. We have one before us now called *Six Little Mince Pies*, a tiny 32mo, which is yet spiritually more indigestible than the six biggest mince pies in the world ever were in the physical sense. We regret that Miss Repplier does not mention in this connection—and we hasten to remedy the lack—the admirable and largely disinterested efforts which Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons are making to introduce into American church libraries a series of stories, which, if not ideally fitted for the purpose, can at least be assimilated by the healthy soul without an accompaniment of religious dyspepsia.

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